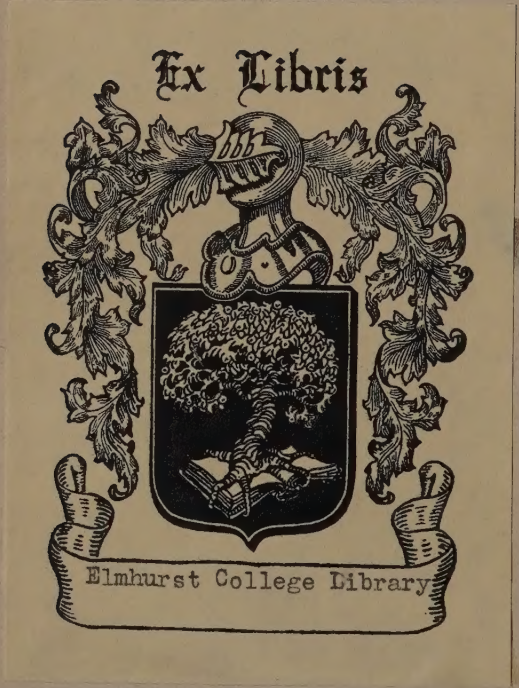
PRINCE HAGEN

BY

UPTON SINCLAIR

ELMHURST COLLEGE LIBRARY
813.52S616PR
PRINCE HAGEN$ CHICAGO
C001
3 2311 00105 438 9


Ex Libris
Elmhurst College Library

Stilli. Fuchs. Fehsenfeld

Presented
to
Elmhurst

PRINCE HAGEN

813.52
S616pr
1499

PRINCE HAGEN

A PHANTASY

Beall

By UPTON SINCLAIR

ELMHURST COLLEGE LIBRARY

1499

CHICAGO
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY
1910

COPYRIGHT, 1903
BY L. C. PAGE & COMPANY
(INCORPORATED)

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

PRESS OF
JOHN F. HIGGINS, 279 Monroe St., Chicago

80

TO

George D. Herron

PRINCE HAGEN

CHAPTER I.

THESE things happened to me when I lived far away in the country; they may seem strange when they are read in cities, but I have determined to tell the story, whether people believe it or not.

It has to do with the Nibelungs. In these days, when the works of Wagner have been so much written about and sung about, one might perhaps assume the Nibelungs to be a people familiar to every one; but lest this should not be so, it must be said, at the outset, that the Nibelungs are strange creatures who live in the deep caves of the ground, and being blind to beauty, spend their lives in digging for gold. Once upon a time, one of them named Alberich found a magic ring which gave him

power over all the rest; and Alberich's son, Hagen, a most unpleasant person, was the murderer of the hero Siegfried, and was drowned by the nymphs of the Rhine, as he well deserved. One may see all these things exactly as they occurred many hundred years ago, in Wagner's "Nibelung Ring."

My story began one warm day in midsummer, not so many years ago. I was camping out in the mountains that summer, and back from the tent there was a deeply-wooded glen with a streamlet in it — a very pleasant place when the weather was sultry. On this particular day I was sitting there in a hammock, and in my lap, lying open, was the score of "Das Rheingold," which I had been studying.

It is a fact about these creations of Wagner, that if one is only caught by them young enough, they become so real to him that the men and women of every-day life remain shadowy in comparison; and the wonderful music belongs to them so absolutely that often a tiny melody has power to bring up a whole scene, and all the emotions of a scene, with never-to-be-diminished intensity.

It chanced that on this afternoon, my eye

had rested on such a theme as that, a half-dozen notes once repeated:

and straightway I was in Nibelheim once more, with its dark caverns and its rocky walls looming about me, and with the terrible Alberich, lash in hand, driving before him the frightened crowd of treasure-laden dwarfs.

The Nibelungs are an interesting race to think about; I have often tried to imagine them, and the kind of life they lived, and the kind of world they built. They are represented to us as creatures not immoral, but unmoral; as having no other ideal than the getting of gold, and therefore having no other duty, — spending the whole of their lives in the effort, and being, both in their joys and sorrows, very funny little men indeed. I dwelt upon that idea for some time, and likewise upon another which it had often brought to my mind: the wonder whether this huge, overgrown civilisation of ours, this vast, machine-built jungle, where bigness is so much taken for greatness, and greediness for power,

— whether it were not perhaps but a larger Nibelheim, without the excuse of darkness. I went on to the thought that it must be the fault of the artists, who are its soul; there being among them no man with any thought of strenuous living, or of the need of truth, no soul to scourge the selfishness, and fire the hearts of the coming men with generous emotion and resolve.

There are a number of small demons especially commissioned to watch out for such moods in people. There is, in the first place, the Demon of General Indisposition, who thinks there is no need to be in such haste to forge those sentences, because the thought is very obvious, and you can rouse it at any time; there is the sly little Demon of the Fact, whose eyes twinkle as he hints that evil has been in the world for some time, and that it occupies considerable territory; there is the aged and sedate devil who reminds you that it is unwise to take life too seriously, and that the *via media* is by far the better; last of all, there is the plain old Demon of the Body, who says nothing, but does most. You see the young soul, so eager, so fierce in its rage against dulness, and so swift in its impatience for beauty,

and you see the man of the world, placid and experienced, taking all that comes to him, and you wonder how it came about. If you could only hear these demons chuckling, you would know better what it means.

In this particular case, I think it was the first named of them and the last; it was a very warm day, and a hammock is a treacherous contrivance; the streamlet tinkled on, and the wind swayed the pine-trees gently. I sat for some time much entertained with the thoughts that teemed in my brain, and not altogether unaware that it was a fine emotion, and one that people would justly admire; then, entirely without realising it, and still imagining that I was hard at work, I began to nod. It was too late for any resistance then; the demons had it all their own way, and must have laughed a great deal; in a few minutes more I was fast asleep.

How long it lasted, I cannot tell; I only know that when I opened my eyes it was dark night; and that, as happens always, I awoke with a start, and with a burst of anger that brought me to my feet with a leap. For a moment I stared about me, half dazed, and scarcely believing it could be true that I had

so wasted my time; and then I fell to work berating myself. It is a very useful habit, and one can sometimes, when he has learned the art, get into such a rage over a wasted hour, that he can fight off the demons for a week.

In this instance, however, I had scarcely begun before I stopped quite short; and I stared about me in wonder. Then, in spite of everything, I could not help smiling; for I had fancied that I heard, from the depths of the woods, a few dancing notes of music:

"It is still ringing in my ears," I thought, with a smile, and then turned to take up the lash again.

But I did not take it, for I heard that music once more, and this time so plainly that I could not but start back and clutch the hammock beside me. Then, as the breeze stirred more strongly, I heard it a third time, and I whispered, half breathlessly, "What can it mean? — It is a violin!"

Now my camp was several miles from the nearest house, and I lived in it alone. There

was no violin in those mountain-forests except my own, and that lay beside the hammock; and yet, even while I stood repeating this to myself, and arguing with my foolish fancy, the skipping music came nearer and nearer, louder and louder. It seemed to spread out on every side of me, the whole place seemed to become alive with it; and I heard not only violins, but, in spite of my astounded incredulity, flutes and a drum, and a triangle, — a whole orchestra, in fact, — all merrily tripping the same quaint measure. The trees about me shook with it, the rivulet danced to it, the forest resounded with it. It swelled out, it rose higher, it took hold of me in spite of myself; it rose to a very Wagner climax, and I cried aloud in breathless wonder: "It must be the Nibelungs!"

Now a moment later I was, of course, ready to laugh at myself. "It can't be," I said, "because there aren't any," and thought it a very fine argument. And so it seemed to be, until a moment later; for then I gasped, helplessly, "*There they are!*"

I have said that the forest was dark; there was a moon, however, half-veiled by clouds. It lighted faintly a little glade just beyond,

and there all at once I saw a figure moving — and then a second — then a whole crowd — with the quick little running motion I knew so well. It was the Nibelungs for a fact!

And now there was real Wagner music; I saw the capering forms on every side of me, the whole forest sprang into life with them, they danced a very Bacchanal about me. The music swept on in climax after climax. I was dazed, bewildered, half unable to convince myself by the evidence of my eyes. Yet I saw the figures as plain as day; I heard them laughing and prattling; I heard the metal sounds of the armloads of treasure they bore — *"niedliches Niblungentand!"* And then suddenly, as if the little creatures had read my mind and meant to convince me of their actuality, I felt a sharp pinch that made me cry out. I heard a laugh from one of the dwarfs, and as I leaped forward, I felt another and yet sharper twitch, and then another. I broke into a run, and in a flash the whole swarm closed about me, pushing and yelling like mad. The music swelled into a deafening crash, with blare of trumpets and clatter of cymbals, and away up the glen we tore.

It was only a few yards further — we came to a sudden turn, to a high black wall of rock. I was about to swerve, when it yawned open before me; the swarm pressed about me, and, before I realised it, I had plunged through the cavernous entrance. There was a loud hissing of steam, and I remember the thought flashing over me that it happened just so in "Das Rheingold;" and then all was blackness, and I found myself rushing swiftly down a steep incline, swept onward by the surging throng. I seized one of my pockets to keep my eye-glasses from falling out; and then, seeing that I could do nothing else, I bent all my energies to keep from stumbling as the wild race went on.

A man of literary tastes is not usually in training for sprinting, and I very speedily reached the end of my strength. I was breathless and staggering, and I had just concluded that if the mad creatures did not stop, I should fall and let them do with me what they chose, when suddenly I felt the ground become level beneath me, and saw a dim light in front. We swept out into the open, and I gazed about me at towering cliffs and yawning caverns, black as night. I took one look, and

then gave a cry of wonder, for I knew it in an instant — we were in Nibelheim!

I leave it to any one to imagine my consternation at this discovery. I stood staring about me in the half-shadows, and, long after I should have regained my composure after my run, I was still leaning upon a ledge of the rocks, gasping for breath, and whispering to myself: "Nibelheim! It is Nibelheim!"

The mob of creatures, who had so suddenly introduced me to the scene, paid no further attention to me. It seemed as if, having brought me there, they had accomplished their purpose, and they vanished in the black caverns. Here and there I still saw a few of the men moving, little stumpy creatures about three feet high, wrapped in rough, furry garments, and with dark, wizened features. "They are the Nibelungs, beyond any doubt," I thought to myself. "I cannot imagine what this strange adventure may mean."

I was still consumed with wonder, though my breath had returned, when I heard a voice coming from the depths of one of the passages, — a voice so deep and grave that it seemed as if it could scarcely come from one of the dwarfs. "Let the earth-man advance," it

said, and I, knowing that the words were meant for me, stepped quietly toward the sound. I had not gone very far before I saw in front of me a figure seated upon a raised chair, — a huge chair, which glittered even in the half-light so that I knew it must be made of gold. The figure bore in its hand a sceptre, and upon its head was a crown, while about it, bended upon one knee, was a throng of the little dwarfs. The man had long black hair, coming half-way to his waist, and I needed to take but one glance in order to know him. I started back, gasping the word "Alberich!"

The old Nibelung heard me, and a smile crossed his face. "You know me, then?" he said.

"Know you?" I echoed. "Why, Alberich —"

I stopped, for I felt some one nudge me; looking down, I saw one of the little creatures. "Your Majesty!" he admonished, in a piping voice. "Your Majesty!"

"Yes," said old Alberich, gravely, having heard him, "for I am the king of the Nibelungs, you know."

"Oh!" I echoed, and then suddenly exclaimed: "But, your Majesty, I understood

that after you lost the Tarnhelm and the ring, you ceased — "

I stopped again, embarrassed. King Alberich laughed.

"Oh, yes," he said, "but you are far behind the age. The Nibelungs discovered the need of a ruler again, you know, and they were used to me; so I am still king."

I bowed in silence. There was a moment's pause, and then he remarked, sociably: "I observe that you are familiar with the works of Wagner."

"Yes," I said, "but I am astonished to find that you know of them."

The king and the courtiers looked at me so that I felt I had said something absurd. "Dear me," said Alberich, "who *should* know of them if not we?" I could not answer that argument, and there was again a pause.

I must have looked foolish in my perplexity; by way of making conversation, I observed: "You are fond of Wagner?"

"H'm!" said King Alberich, meditatively. "Not so fond as you earth-men are; he is a very much overrated man, you know."

I looked interested. "You see," went on

the other, "we are in a position here to understand him and his methods much better. We know all his tricks."

"Pray," said I, quickly — for I have my idols — "pray explain!" I had quite forgotten the strangeness of my situation in my excitement about that remark.

"Willingly," said King Alberich, smiling. "Perhaps you think him original?"

"Original!" I gasped. "Surely, of all things! If ever a man —"

"No doubt," interrupted the other, laughing, "no doubt. For instance, you have heard him called original in his scenic effects?"

"Why, certainly," I answered, promptly.

"Well," remarked the king, with a wave of his hand, "look about you!"

And I looked. As I have said before, it was the very identical Nibelheim that I had seen a score of times. Except for the absence of signs of wear, and of the energetic head and shoulders of the conductor, I should have thought I was in the Metropolitan Opera House.

"And you call that Wagner's originality!" sniffed the old Nibelung.

His dreadful meaning had flashed over me

all in an instant. "You mean he came here and copied it?" I cried.

"Exactly," laughed Alberich.

I was crushed. I knew not what to say. For a lifelong Wagnerian, that was almost too much.

"But, your Majesty!" I cried. "Surely not all —"

"You heard our Nibelung music?" asked he. I had heard it, alas, and I could say no more.

In the meantime, the other had continued, relentlessly. "Original!" he laughed. "It is indeed wondrous originality! To listen in the Rhine-depths to the song of the maidens, to dwell in the forest and steal its murmurs, to catch the crackling of the fire, and the flowing of the water, and the galloping of the wind, and the death-march of the thunder — and then write it all down for your own! And to take our story and tell it just as it happened, — to take the very words from our lips, and sign your own name to them! Originality!"

For a long time I could say nothing, no glimmer of hope came to me. Then suddenly, however, I exclaimed: "But, your Majesty,

one thing at least! Even his enemies granted him that! The invisible orchestra!"

And King Alberich laughed again. "Do you see *our* orchestra?" he asked.

And then, for the first time, I noticed, with a start, what I had taken as only natural before — that this whole scene had been set to music! I had been so used to the thought before that it would have seemed unnatural to me if the voices of the Nibelungs had not been accompanied by the wheezing of stopped trumpets, if a bassoon had not followed the deep voice of Alberich, if the announcement of Wagner's damnation had not been accompanied by a *tutti fortissimo*. Now that I thought of it, I was made very happy to notice that my own thinking was made beautiful by soaring melodies upon the strings with an accompaniment of horns and harp; by which I knew that my heart was clean, and that I was young.

I was so carried away by the wonder of these discoveries that I forgot all about the loss of my argument; I listened for a time in joy to my own heart's singing, and then I cried out, eagerly: "But do you mean that everything here happens to music?"

"If you had only ears to hear," said the old king, gravely, "you would know that the universe happens to music."

After that, I said nothing for a long time. I listened, and, when the spell was broken, it was by Alberich's voice again.

"The way of your coming here is strange, my dear sir," said he, "and no doubt you are confused and puzzled. But I pray you to have no alarm, for no harm is meant. I have only taken the liberty of having an earth-man brought to me because I have need to consult some one upon a matter of grave importance."

I looked at him in some astonishment, wondering very much what the old Nibelung could possibly wish to consult me about; I saw he was eyeing me keenly.

"Who are you?" he demanded, suddenly.

I told him my name.

"And tell me something about yourself," he said. "What do you do?"

"I am an author," I replied.

"That means that you write books?" said he. "What sort of books?"

"Mainly," said I, "I edit the books of friends who drown themselves."

His Majesty gazed at me again cautiously.

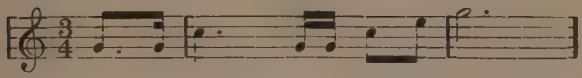
He turned to his attendants, and they held a consultation in whispers; I bore the ordeal as gracefully as I could. Afterward King Alberich turned to stare at me again.

"Well," he said, suddenly, "there is plenty of time for us to discuss the thing; we need not make up our minds at once. You are in no great hurry, I trust?"

I answered that I was not. "I am very much interested in my adventure," I continued, with a smile. "It is quite new to me — all your Majesty's kingdom."

"Ah, yes!" replied the king, and, with a sudden gesture, he rose. "It is well said," he continued; "it is always customary to show our visitors about the land — to show our treasures, above all. That will please you, no doubt."

"Most certainly, your Majesty," I replied. At the same time, I heard that wonderful orchestra sing out, as cheerily as a little bird:



which made it seem like an old friend.

Before this, I had noticed the courtiers

standing listlessly about, and had been impressed with the thought that King Alberich was now a very old man, with trembling, palsied hands. At this moment, however, he moved with alacrity; and the eyes of the others gleamed darkly, as we moved toward the treasure-vaults.

"You see," the old king said, "we do not often have a chance to show our wonderful possessions to a stranger."

"I understand," I said, as I saw him kneel down to unlock a huge iron door. "And I, for my part, am very much honoured indeed."

The door creaked on its hinges. Beyond it loomed vast darkness, yielding a damp odour, and long echoes of every sound we made. "It must be an immense place!" I exclaimed.

"This cavern runs for several miles back in the earth," was the calm reply. I gasped for breath.

"You do not mean that it is all full of gold!" I cried.

"From ceiling to roof, with solid masses of it," said the king, gravely.

I own that I was awestricken; and, in the half-light at the entrance, I saw the old Ni-

belung's eyes shining like fire. But I heard the music give a nasal snarl. I shuddered.

"Forward!" cried the king. "All this is nothing to what you shall see later on."

He strode out into the darkness, I behind him, down a passage just large enough for our bodies. "The gold is on both sides of us," said Alberich. "One is almost overpowered by the presence of so much majesty, of so much slumbering power. Put your hand upon it, feel it — how cold and hard it is!"

The old man's voice had suddenly become deep and resonant. "Forward!" he exclaimed. "There is so much to see!"

We strode on, past solid walls of the metal, all in utter darkness; we walked and walked, until I was weary, and until I began to fear that there was no end. "One thousand, six hundred and seventy-two paces," said the king, counting. "In eleven more we come to the vault of the carved and beaten vessels. Ah, here we are!"

The procession stopped, a key turned, and we entered. "Here," said King Alberich, "here are the priceless of my treasures. All of these wondrous carvings are by masters of

undying fame, and all are worth many times the weight of the gold."

I felt a new burst of interest; I had heard of the Nibelung smiths, and I exclaimed, excitedly: "Let us see them!"

"Put your hands upon this first of them," said the king; "this is by the wondrous master, Mimi, who died seven or eight hundred years ago. A cavern of wealth could not buy this precious thing!"

It was a huge vase, reaching nearly to the ceiling. "Give me a light," I cried. "Let me look at it!"

"A light?" cried the king.

"A light!" echoed the courtiers, in wonder. "A light?"

"Of course," I said. "How else can I see it?"

"But, my dear sir!" protested King Alberich, "candles are so expensive! We never dream of bringing a light into our treasure-vaults!"

I was quite helpless with perplexity. "But then, what is the good of the beautiful vase?" I cried.

"Why, my dear sir, can you not know its value without seeing it? These works, you

must understand, are by the acknowledged masters; every one knows their worth without the need of examining them."

"Oh," said I, beginning to comprehend, "you value them by the *name?*"

"Of course," replied the king, relieved at my words. "I have in this vault, for instance, no less than seventeen Mimis, three of them over ten feet high, and one of them the world-renowned Coronation-cup, which I will presently show you. This one upon which your hand rests was sold in the beginning for over one hundred and seventy thousand dollars, and has since nearly doubled in value!"

"But give me some idea of it," I put in. "What is the design?"

"The design?" asked the king, slightly embarrassed. "Why, bless me — I'm sure — I don't know."

"Not know!" I gasped.

"My dear sir," he protested, "how could I, with my huge collection, keep track of such things as that? And what good would it do me, besides?"

I did not reply for a moment; then I said: "But I wonder, then, that your people should care to make vases at all."

"The tendency is indeed that way," was the reply. "And now to go on with the treasure —"

"But, your Majesty," I put in, hastily, "if we are not to see the carvings, will it not be just as well for you to tell me about them, without taking me through all these long vaults?"

"Not go through the vaults!" cried the king.

"Not go through the vaults!" echoed the courtiers, in amazement.

It took me several minutes to make the little men believe that I was serious in this, and that I really did not care to handle those vast masses of gold.

"I had hoped to show you all my possessions!" groaned the poor king.

"But, your Majesty," I asked, "how long would that take?"

"Less than a month," he said, pleadingly.

"But, your Majesty," I exclaimed, "you forgot that my life is short."

"Ah, yes," said he, shaking his head, "I forgot that you were an earth-man. You see how pitifully limited your poor career must

be! If you were only a Nibelung, you might live four or five thousand years."

"It is very sad," I replied, as we turned to retrace our steps; "but you will have to describe your treasures to me instead. Tell me, are all the Nibelungs as rich as you?"

"I am by no means a rich man," said Alberich, "even though I am king. The extent of some of our modern fortunes, sir, would simply exceed your belief. There goes one of the richest of Nibelungs now!"

Nothing was said for some time after that. The king was watching the great man out of sight, and I was thinking.

"Tell me, your Majesty," I asked, suddenly, "you Nibelungs know nothing better to seek than gold?"

He looked at me in perplexity. "Why, no," he said; "what is there more valuable than gold?"

I hesitated, uncertain just how to make plain what I meant. "Do you never get tired of this life?" I inquired; "do you never wish to travel?"

"A great many have wished it," was the reply. "But competition is so fierce in these days, it takes all one's faculties."

1499

MHURST COLLEGE LIBRARY

Again I was silent.

"I suppose," I said at last, "you have never thought of unselfishness, have you?"

"Unselfishness?" asked the old king. "How do you mean?"

I cast about me for a way to make my thought plain. "Suppose," I said, "that some one wished to dig gold for you, instead of for himself?"

The king looked puzzled. "Why," he said, "it would be some trick he was playing on me."

"But suppose that he really *did* wish to?" I insisted.

By the way that Alberich and his courtiers looked at me, it was plain that they considered I was a little wrong in my mind. "In that case," said the king, gravely, "in that case, I should most certainly let him dig."

I dropped the subject. There was a pause, and then Alberich, who had no interest whatever in my vagaries, asked: "Would you like to see more of the country?"

"I think not, your Majesty," I said; "it must be getting late."

In reality, I had no idea of what time it was, but I was disgusted with the darkness

and with the stifling atmosphere of the gloomy caverns.

"Yes," said Alberich, "that is so, and we have a matter of business to discuss, you remember. Let us return to the palace."

The "palace" I made out to be the place where I had first entered. I thought, with relief, that I should find space there at any rate, and fresh air, and I set out quickly to follow the party.

Weariness and depression had settled upon me in the noisome caverns; and when I came out into the open again, I stretched out my arms and drew a long breath of relief; at the same instant the music, which before had been wheezing and scraping, flung suddenly loose in a fierce surge of joy that trembled and quivered, and shook the darkness from its wings. I stopped and listened in wonder, breathless, because I knew it was *I* who was making that; and I laughed, and cried aloud in childish glee: "Oh, is it not beautiful?"

King Alberich shrugged his shoulders; it was evident, by the way the others looked at me, that they thought I was entirely daft. "I am glad, at any rate," said Alberich, after

a long pause, "that there is somebody who likes that orchestra."

"Likes it!" I echoed. "Do you mean that you do not?"

"You would not if you lived here very long," was the reply. "You can have no idea how monotonous it becomes when one is digging. I have heard it do nothing but thump on the drum for sixteen hours a day; and sometimes, when I am bargaining for a new vase for my collection, it keeps up such a dreadful wheezing that I have to pay a few cents more, just to get rid of it!"

"But such music as you heard just now?" I protested, helplessly. "Surely —"

"What is the good of it?" asked the other. "It is like drinking; you get fond of it, and it never does anything but waste your time and distract your mind."

I let the subject drop, and gradually matters sank back to their normal state. At last I ventured to suggest: "Your Majesty had some business to talk about with me."

"Ah, yes," said Alberich, quickly, "let us attend to that now." And he seated himself upon the throne, and had a chair brought for

me. He dismissed his courtiers, and in another minute we were alone in the hall.

"Now," said the king, "we can talk the thing over thoroughly." And he leaned over toward me, becoming confidential.

"You know, my dear sir," he inquired, "that I had a son, Hagen, who was the slayer of the great Siegfried?"

"Yes, your Majesty," I responded.

"A most lamentable affair," said he. "I have since lived bitterly to repent my own share in such violence. You did not know, I presume, that Hagen, too, had a son, by one of the daughters of earth?"

"No," I said; "he is not mentioned in history."

"Very true," replied Alberich; "but that son, Prince Hagen, is now living. And, in the inevitable course of events, he will fall heir to the throne which I now occupy."

"Ah," I said, "I see."

"The boy," continued the other, "is seven or eight hundred years old, which in earth measure would make him about nineteen. A very critical age, my friend, in the training of the young."

"Yes," I assented.

"Now," said the king, "I have sent for you to speak frankly. I am in trouble, — in fact, I am utterly at a loss; I am helpless, and almost hopeless. I call myself, sir, a plain, hard-headed man of business; I generally know what's what, and I've held my own with the best. But my understanding has not proved equal to this emergency; and it is because I have been given to understand that earth-people think more and see farther than others, that I have had one brought here. I need advice."

I was interested in the old man after this confession; the flattery was very subtle. "I will do what I can," I said.

"Well," continued the other, "you know my interest in Nibelheim. This prosperity which you see is my life-work; and now, when I think of the possibility of my death, my one care is about its future. When I look at the future now, I see storm. Yes, sir, storm! I see ruin and misery and despair! For there is no use mincing words with you, this grandson of mine, Prince Hagen, is *bad!*"

"You do not mean it," I said, as the king stopped.

"Bad, sir, hopelessly and wholly bad," he reiterated.

I thought for a moment. "You mean that he does not show a proper desire for gold?"

"He shows desire enough," was the reply, "but it is the way in which he shows it. To put the matter in a nutshell, my dear friend, Prince Hagen is his father come to life again, — a child of violence and crime."

The dreadful figure of Hagen stood out in my imagination above the pettiness of Nibelheim. I shuddered.

"Is it not a very cruel thing," went on King Alberich, plaintively. "Once — once only, in a long lifetime — I was tempted from the paths of righteousness; and for ever, after that, evil must haunt me! Only think of it! for seven or eight centuries I have striven with all my might to make amends for that violence; I have toiled and dug night and day, as if I were made of iron; I have had but one purpose and one thought in life; and now, after all my efforts to be a good and useful citizen, I find this boy Hagen as wild and restless as I was in my most violent days, and even more disdainful of authority and order. You can have no conception of it, sir. He is

utterly beyond command, mine and all others; his thirst for gold is so insatiate, his contempt for others so savage, that, verily, I believe that he would do murder, as his father did, if he were not prevented. He robs right and left, and, when he is discovered, no man can tell whether he will choose to lie, or to confess it with mocking defiance. And, sir, you can have no idea of his energy and daring; we can only control him by keeping him under lock and key. And one cannot keep a king in a cage."

Old Alberich stopped; his voice had been trembling as he spoke, and there were almost tears in his eyes. "Ah," he pleaded, "think what will become of the treasure I have amassed, of the laws I have made! Think that peace and plenty must give way to strife and misery in our land!"

"It is very sad," I said, mechanically.

"Yes," cried the other, "but what am I to do? Tell me, sir, how can this boy be trained to respect the property of others? how can he be taught what is the real destiny of Nibelheim? Let me tell you, in a word, why my followers led you here. It is because I wish to tell you that if you could show me

any way to remedy this evil — if you could only stay here and use your greater strength of mind and body to overcome Prince Hagen, and teach him what is right — sir, you should carry hence a treasure beyond anything the surface of the earth has ever seen. Tell me, can you give me help?"

And the old man stopped and gazed at me imploringly; there was a long silence.

I had no interest in King Alberich's civilisation, nor was the offer of reward of import to me; I am a poet, and my business in the world is imagining things different. But it had occurred to me, while listening to the king, that there might be a chance to do something to lift these wretched Nibelungs from the blind degradation in which they were sunk. I had done a great deal of crying out in the wilderness about the follies of men, and got small thanks for my hoarseness; might it not be that here was a case in which an idealist might be of real use? I could not but believe that these creatures could be lifted; that with education and intelligence would come generosity and aspiration; and, clearly, a chance of turning their energies to purposes of beauty

and goodness was not one that a man who sought to be helpful could neglect.

"King Alberich," I said, slowly and thoughtfully, "I have things of importance to do, and I have no time to stay down here and train Prince Hagen —"

I saw the old man's face fall. "Oh, do not tell me that!" he cried. "I —"

"Listen," I said. "There is perhaps something else that we can do. How would it do to take Prince Hagen up to the world?"

Alberich gave a start.

"The world in which he lives here," I continued, "is a small one; there he might have a wider field in which to vent his energies. There, too, he might be instructed in many things that it would be useful for a king to know; and men could be found there far better fitted to teach him than I, and more able to understand his disposition."

I was striving to put the matter before the old man as delicately as I could. I could not well have said that I was cherishing a hope of teaching his grandson the ideal of a Christian society, of awakening in his savage heart some gleam of a soul, so that he might learn to love other things than wealth, and might

come back to Nibelheim with a fiery determination to clean it out as a noisome swamp. I could not say that I was sure Prince Hagen could not live with honest men very long without coming to hate the darkness and the meanness of this cave-born race.

It was plain that my suggestion was an entirely new one to old King Alberich; he sat for some time gazing at me in perplexity. "You mean that you yourself would see to it that the proper training was given?" he asked.

"If I took him with me," I answered, "it would mean that I was interested in accomplishing my purpose."

"But could you manage him?" exclaimed the old man, gazing about him with a vague alarm. "Could anybody manage him? He is a demon in his will."

"All boys are more or less demons," I said. "All have to be broken; sometimes those who have the most self-will make the noblest men when they have been rightly trained."

The king seemed to take heart from my confidence; in truth, I was minded for anything in those days, being accustomed blithely to maintain that any difficulty was but a call

upon a man's energies; from which it may be guessed that I was not much older than Prince Hagen.

"If you can manage him, that is one difficulty out of the way," said Alberich; "but your proposal is so unexpected I scarcely know what to reply."

I thought to myself, as I watched him, that perhaps it was the first time that the old Nibelung had ventured far from the track of convention in his thousands of years of life. He paced back and forth, knitting his brows and mumbling to himself, twisting the question about, and peering at every side of it, as if it were a precious treasure he was buying. At last he came back to his first question, of whether or not Prince Hagen could be controlled. I made a suggestion which cut the matter short abruptly, — "Why not see what he thinks of it himself?"

A light dawned on the other's face; he called the Nibelungs, and, in response to his command, several of them went to seek the boy. As they led him in, they clung so close to his side that I fancied he must even now be in durance for some offence.

Truly he was not a promising person to

wreak one's ideas upon; there was, as Alberich had said, all of Hagen in him. He was, in the first place, a foot taller than any of the other Nibelungs, coming, in fact, up to my shoulder; he had the wizened, dwarf-like features of the race, but with a grimness that came from elsewhere. His hair and eyes were jet-black, the latter gleaming darkly from beneath deep, lowering brows. As they brought him in, he spoke to neither of us, but glowered sullenly at me. He gave no sign of hearing, as his grandfather timidly ventured an introduction.

I must say that, as I watched this figure, I had waverings; I began to share the king's doubts if he could be induced to submit himself to me, and even to hope that he might not. But the question was settled otherwise, and with the swiftness of a lightning-flash; for the king stammered, hastily: "Hagen, this gentleman wishes to take you with him to see the life of the earth-men;" and the boy started back, a swift glow flushing across his face, and a new light leaping into his eyes. He stared from Alberich to me, and back again to Alberich, exclaiming, incredulously, "No!"

"It is true, Hagen," the old man reiterated. "It all depends upon whether you wish to go!"

And Hagen flung out a wild cry. "Wish to go!" he gasped, his face transfigured. "Oh, by the gods, just try me!"

And that settled the matter. I found myself whispering faintly, "You're in for it;" and then upbraiding myself for a coward.

It was wonderful to see how young Hagen's sullenness vanished; it was like cloud-land shadows on the mountains. And by the thousand swift questions he asked — who I was, and what the world was like, and what was the reason of our trip — it was plainly to be seen that he was still a boy. Between his inquiries, and the cautions and exhortations of the old king, I passed the next hour or two of my time. It was agreed that we should start immediately, but afterward we found that it was far after midnight, and so I accepted the king's invitation to remain with him until the following morning.

"You would find it a tedious climb to the surface, anyhow," he said, laughing. "How would you like me to have you carried there while you slept?"

I did not make any answer to what I thought his jest, but followed him to his palace, a cavern in the rocks near by; in one of its several niches, called the guest-chamber, I bade good night to my host and his excited grandson, and then flung myself down upon a pallet of straw. Being a tired and healthy person, in a few minutes I was sound asleep.

The next incident of this tale is the opening of my eyes. I awoke all at once, and gave one glance about me; then I sat up with a start. The brook was tinkling beside me, the breeze was murmuring through the pine-trees above me, and I was lying in the hammock, gently rocking, the open volume of "Das Rheingold" still lying in my lap.

I knew not what to make of it for a moment; I saw that the sun was just sinking behind the mountains, and I exclaimed, half-aloud: "How long have I been sleeping?"

I got up from the hammock, trying to collect my faculties. I found myself debating in perplexity, "How in the world can Alberich have gotten me here?" when suddenly the real truth of the thing flashed over me, and I started back and caught hold of the

hammock, and shook from head to foot with uncontrollable laughter.

"Certainly," I gasped, "that was the most extraordinary dream I ever had in my life!"

And truly, the more I thought of it, the more wonderful it seemed. It had taken such a hold on me that I had actually sat in the hammock, convinced for a moment that I had spent the previous night in Nibelheim!

I was so much amused at these things that I never once thought of being angry at having slept away a warm afternoon. I thought, in fact, that if one could dream like that often, it would pay him to sleep. "There is a story in it," I muttered. "It is a real idea!"

I took up my book, and made my way down the glen to where my little tent stood by the lake-shore; I went in and sat down, still thinking about that dream. Every circumstance was as vivid as ever. I saw the dark caverns, saw the wizened face of old Alberich, and the sullen glare of young Hagen; I was sure that my ears were still ringing with the Nibelung music.

"The Nibelung music," I mused, as I sat there; "I really think there are possibilities in that thought. Fancy a poet dowered with

the gift that the life of his soul should be uttered in music; fancy him dreaming in the forests, and battling upon the mountain-tops with the storm; fancy him by his gift made master of all true men, and wondered at for a madman by the mean!"

Then outside I heard the footsteps of the little French-Canadian boy, who rows up the lake to bring me my milk and butter, and who always takes care to arrive with his clinking pails whenever I am nearest to the heights. I gave up in despair, and sat waiting, for I knew that he could not set down his burden and be gone; I knew that he would need to stop and chatter.

I was not mistaken; he dropped his load, and then stood leaning in the doorway, twisting his bare toes together and eyeing me. I sometimes wonder just what his fancies are about the man who lives away off in the forest.

"Bon jo'," said he, in French-Canadian fashion.

"Good day," said I, abruptly. I did not expect to be interested in the youngster's conversation; but as it happened, his next three words made me jump.

"Where you yest'day?" he asked.

"Yesterday?" I inquired. "Why — what do you mean?"

"You not here," he replied; "where you go?"

I stared at the youngster; I could not half believe my ears. "You are crazy!" I laughed — I noticed that the laugh was strange. "Don't you remember yesterday I gave you the penny?"

The boy shook his head. "No, no," he declared, stolidly; "that day 'fore yest'day."

I said nothing; I could not even think. Meanwhile, the boy went on, "I come yest'day with my pa; you not here. We wait — ve'y late; you not come. Where you go?"

Now it may seem incredible, but all the time I had been so calmly musing about that dream of mine, I had been haunted by a strange, uncomfortable feeling. This is the twentieth century, and I am not given to superstitions. But for all that, there was something in me which wanted to cry out what it did not dare to cry out — that it was no dream at all — that I had really spent the night in Nibelheim!

And now, therefore, the effect of the boy's words may be imagined. For a long time I

simply stared at him in consternation, groping in darkness; and then, suddenly, I sprang at him and caught him by the shoulders. "You can't mean that!" I cried, wildly. "It can't be possible!"

"W-what?" gasped the boy, in fright.

"That I was not here yesterday! That I did not give you that penny last night!"

"But I spend that penny yest'day matin," said the boy, stolidly.

Now a thing like that was almost maddening; I stood in the middle of the room, running my hands through my hair, and staring blankly into space. "Nibelungs!" I gasped. "Why, it is utter madness — it is ridiculous! But in heaven's name, can I have slept twenty-four hours in that hammock? And that music! Surely it couldn't be possible — "

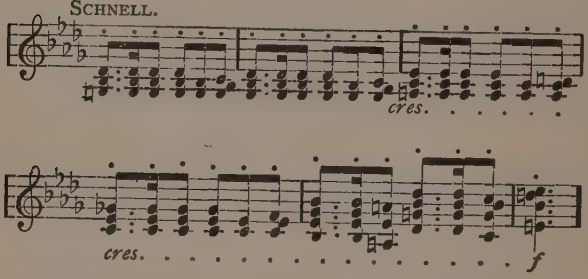
And then I stopped short, transfixed; I bent forward in wonder, my eyes staring; and then I turned upon the boy, and saw that he was staring too.

"Did you hear that?" I panted. "Did you?"

"Somebody play," he said, wonderingly. "Who do that?"

And then, just as on the previous night,

I heard the sound again. An instant later it rang out suddenly in a loud crash that made me leap; and it surged louder, swifter and swifter, nearer and nearer, until it seemed to burst in my very face:



And after that for one brief instant there was a dead silence; it seemed an age. I looked at the boy, and the boy looked at me, and both of us were white; my own hands were trembling. "That could not be a delusion!" I found myself thinking, swiftly. "It must be true!"

And a moment later came a knock!

The flap of the tent had fallen down, and some one had tapped upon the tent-pole, in the absence of a door. I was weak and trembling, and there was warm perspiration on

my hands, as I said to the boy, "Go and see who it is."

He obeyed; I saw him take hold of the flap to push it aside, and was conscious of a cold chill. But at the same instant, the flap was flung back from the outside, and I saw a dark figure standing in the entrance, and smiling at me.

"Good afternoon!" said a familiar voice. "Did you think I was not coming?"

It was Prince Hagen!

CHAPTER II.

SOON after that, Prince Hagen and I were seated in the tent, the farm-boy having taken his departure. The Nibelung had parted with the uncouth costume of his fellows, and was clad in a natty summer suit, obtained, I could not guess how; he twirled a straw hat in one hand, and, seated on a chair, with his legs crossed carelessly, he gazed at me from beneath his half-closed eyelids.

"Well," he said, "what are we to do now?"

The truth to be told, I did not know. I gazed at him in perplexity, and at last stammered, "Why — you see — I have scarcely had time to think about any plans, it has all been so sudden."

"Oh, very well," said he, with a laugh; "think away. *I* sha'n't bother you."

He turned, and began coolly surveying my premises; in the meantime, I strove to "think

away," as directed, but found it not easy to take my eyes off my newly found protégé. He, for his part, was sufficiently occupied to take no notice of me; everything was evidently new to him, and he got up and began strolling around, examining each object in turn. He studied my oil-stove in perplexity, and gave it up as hopeless, incidentally leaving it so that the kerosene ran out. He examined my shot-gun, looking into the muzzle, and tapping it to see if it was hollow, in a way which showed plainly that he did not know what it was. In the same fashion, he wandered about the room, until at last, happening to see me eyeing him, he asked, "I beg pardon, but what do you do?"

"I am an author," I said, deprecatingly; "I write books."

"Oh," said he, "but why do you come way out here in the forest, and live like this?"

"I wish to be alone," I explained, "so that I can think undisturbed."

"Humph!" said Prince Hagen, and no more. I was destined to learn afterward, to my discomfort, how often he thought a great deal and said nothing.

"You do not expect me to stay here, too, I hope?" he observed, at last.

"Oh, no," I replied, "by no means. I understand that it is your wish to see the world."

There was a silence for a moment, and then I remarked, "It is about supper-time, and perhaps we should get a little better acquainted if we first had something to eat. We can discuss all our problems after that."

"I am willing," said the other, with the utmost good humour; "what have you got?"

"Let me see," I mused; "I am afraid this is rather an 'off day;' provisions are due to-morrow." I named what I had.

"That's all right," said Hagen; "bring 'em along."

I got out my little folding-table, and spread the feast; for a few minutes nothing more was said, my guest falling vigorously upon the eatables, and I, in the meantime, diligently thinking. When, at last, the repast was over, and the Nibelung had laid down his knife and fork, I coughed once or twice, and then began, very impressively:

"Prince Hagen, I think it best to tell you frankly, in the first place, just why you are

sent here, and just what I have promised your grandfather to attempt. It is his hope that your sojourn here may have the effect of broadening your understanding, and making you more fit for the grave duties of kingship, which must some day devolve upon you; that it may also —"

I had a great many thoughts in my mind, most of them phrased very finely, as I thought; but I stopped just then, because my companion's eyes were twinkling, and because I felt uncomfortable.

"Jolly old cuss, my grand-dad, ain't he?" observed he.

I was silent. Prince Hagen remained in his former position, leaning back and watching me under his half-closed lids; I felt as if I were in an ambush. His wizened features had taken on a quizzical look that was most disconcerting.

"Tell me," he asked, suddenly, "you don't suppose that that's the way *I'm* looking at this thing, do you?"

I stammered some words; the other went on: "I'm not losing any sleep over the grave duties of kingship that are going to devolve; when they do, I'll chance 'em, but, between

you and me, I think the old chap means to hang on as long as he can. Pray don't let us worry any more about *that.*"

There was a moment's pause; then the speaker went on, with easy self-possession: "I have to humour old Alberich sometimes, you know, but there's no need of any taffy between you and me; I'm out for some fun, and I think I can soon find out how to have it. There's not the least use of your worrying yourself thinking what you are going to do with me."

That had not been my idea of how matters were to stand, but Prince Hagen seemed to take it all serenely. I was quite nonplussed for the time.

"I suppose," he said, a smile flitting across his face, "that the governor's been telling you some spicy tales about my general deportment?"

"Ahem!" answered I. "Why — he did say that you had been rather — er — "

"Yes," said the other, "that's all right. And I suppose he's scared you not a little, and you've been wondering if you mightn't be murdered in your bed?" He laughed, and moved his chair a little nearer.

"Now listen to me, old man," he began; "we'll soon get things straight." (I was not a little taken aback by the "old man," but I presumed it came from the other's princely training, and so let it pass for the present.) "The truth of the matter is, you know, that I like to have my way; I always have had it, and always mean to, and I can be just as ugly as necessary when I don't. But there's not the slightest reason why you and I should quarrel. I want to see the world, and so long as I'm entertained, I'm all right. I mean to lay low, you understand, and look 'round me, and I might just as well tell you beforehand that I don't mean to give anybody any trouble."

After which speech, Prince Hagen leaned back and beamed upon me, conveying his genial conviction that he had said a very handsome thing.

I was completely taken aback and overpowered by his condescension. I could only reply vaguely that I thanked him for his kindness. After a moment he went on:

"In the first place, of course," he said, "I'm entirely helpless, for I've no more idea of this world of yours than an unhatched

turkey. I should be quite lost, and I must obviously have time to learn things, and get to feeling at home. What are we going to do about that?"

"That was what I wished to talk to you about," I said, brightening a trifle.

"Well, talk away," said the prince.

"Your position," I said, "is not so very different from that of our own sons; they, too, have to learn about the world, and it is the custom to send them to schools, where they are taught everything that is needed to fit them for life. Afterward they go to some college, where they complete their education." It was rather humiliating to find myself offering these suggestions, when I had meant to take firm command; but my relief was greater than I chose to acknowledge to myself when Prince Hagen agreed promptly with my idea.

"That's very excellent," he said, his face brightening up. "And how long should I have to stay in these places?"

"Some years," I replied; "it would depend upon how much it was found necessary to teach."

"I see," was the response. "I don't think

it will take me any such time to catch on to things; but of course I sha'n't stay any longer than I wish to."

"Er — yes," said I, hesitatingly.

"And now," went on the prince, mildly, "the rest will be quickly settled. You have any such place in mind?"

"Yes," I said, "I have an old college friend, whose father, an excellent clerical gentleman, keeps a boarding-school not so many hours' ride from here. There is a summer session, for which you would be just in time. You will find Doctor Myer a most delightful man, and I can recommend him as a person of the highest character."

"Yes," said Prince Hagen, vaguely, "that will be very nice. But I'll find out about him myself when I get there. And now — we don't want to waste any time — tell me how I am to travel."

"Let me see," I mused, glancing at the clock. "The night-train leaves the village at the foot of the lake at ten. It is a moonlight night; there is no reason why we should not start to-night, if you wish it."

And Prince Hagen was on his feet in an instant. "Come," he said, "let us be off."

I had made up my mind to sacrifice one day from my work, and run down and see my charge safely ensconced. I desired to have a long talk with the good clergyman, to explain to him the situation. I paused, therefore, only to fling a few things into my bag, and to make my tent fast, and then I hurried to the boat, and was soon rowing down the lake. Prince Hagen, in the meantime, was asking a thousand questions about everything concerned, promising so eager a pupil that for the first time I began to feel encouraged and sanguine. This continued also when we came to the town, and to the depot, and to the train; my companion was quite exciting in his eagerness, and I found it no uninteresting experience to be with a person who had never heard of a railroad or a telegraph before.

I had gotten my mail in the town, and in it were some papers. On board the sleeper I saw Prince Hagen eyeing these last, and I explained their use. I found that the extent of his education was the "three R's," probably because these alone were needed in keeping accounts. I did what I could to indicate to him what the direction of his future studies

would be. While we conversed on these matters, I had, of course, things easily my own way, and was flattered to find myself in possession of the authority I had failed at first to exert. As I dilated upon the wonders of steam and electricity, I became as impressive as if these achievements of humanity had been all my own; and after that had continued for some time, I felt bold enough to attempt once more to entertain Prince Hagen with the beautiful plans I had formed for his future.

We were speaking of studies that would fit my companion for his future career. "You have no objection to looking forward to your kingship?" I hinted, remembering how summarily the question had been dismissed before.

"Oh, not in the least," said he, with a smile.

"Did you ever think of preparing yourself for the difficult task?" I inquired.

"I'm not afraid of it," he replied, his black eyes sparkling.

"Let me tell you," I said, "what has been my hope in bringing you here with me. It seemed to me, when I saw the life of your people, that it was pitifully sordid and poor,

and I was so sure that there were things in the civilisation of men that would help to raise and improve them that it was a joy to me to think of interesting you in our life."

My companion looked thoughtful. "Yes," said he, "that is true. If we could only introduce a railroad like this, for instance. I believe I'll set to work learning about it; I'm quick at things like that. Only think what a revolution it would make in the mining and transporting of our gold!"

I was a trifle disconcerted for a moment, and I sat gazing at Prince Hagen. Suddenly I asked: "Does it never really occur to you how pitiful it is for a nation to centre its whole life in the digging of gold?"

My companion looked slightly perplexed. "No," he said, "I can't say I ever thought of it. How do you mean?"

"I am sincerely hopeful," I said, "that you will come to see what I mean, — that you will discover in yourself and in your countrymen powers more beautiful and more worthy of cultivation. Suppose, for instance — to keep close to practical things — that you should find it possible to bring a little beauty into

your land, to make beautiful homes for your people to dwell in."

"Yes," was the doubting response. "But what good would it do? It would cost a great deal of time and money to make your beautiful homes, and then no one would care anything about them when they were made."

"But might not they be taught to care?"

Prince Hagen looked thoughtful. "Yes," he said, "possibly. If they could be taught to care, then the buildings would be worth a great deal to me."

I felt, after those last words, somewhat like a bird brought down on the wing.

"Prince Hagen," I said, very gravely, "I fear your delusion is deeply rooted. Tell me, have you never heard anything about Christianity?"

"No," said he, "tell me about it."

"Perhaps it is there," I answered, "that we can touch the real differences between your view of things and mine. Christianity, my dear sir, is the religion of the people whom you are going to visit."

"Religion?" repeated the other. "Why, the gods are dead, I thought."

"Yes," said I, "yours are, but not ours.

And we have been taught that the true ideal of life is to love one another, and to find our happiness in one another's happiness, in giving and in helping, and in making one's life a joy."

I felt that I had made an impression this time, at any rate; my companion was looking at me with interest. "What a curious thing," he said. "And tell me, then, is it true that everybody here acts upon those principles?"

"I wish I could say that," I answered. "It is not every one —"

"Was that why some man built this railroad, for instance?"

I stopped, a little in trouble. "I think," I said, "that — er —"

The other saw that for some reason he had embarrassed me, and he considerately dropped the question. "What was it you were going to say before?" he asked.

"I was going to say that there were many bad and selfish men among us, and that it is fatally easy to let their actions blind us to the real and deep motives of society. You will find, however, that the men who feel and

act as I have described are the ones who in the end are deeply and truly respected."

"Ah, yes," said the other; "I shall see about that as I look around. I don't mean to take anything on hearsay, you know."

He was a cold-blooded kind of a person to talk to, was Prince Hagen; but I was determined not to be daunted in my enthusiasm just then. "Tell me," I asked, "would you not really care to be honoured for ever as the benefactor of your people? Supposing you were to become convinced of the truth of this religion, and were to introduce it, so that the lowest man in your kingdom might be made happy in the consciousness that he could attain true greatness as well as any? Supposing that modern improvements might be introduced into your realm, so that it might become broader and more beautiful? Supposing that your people might be educated to think and know something of the wonders of the universe in which they live, and of the true happiness to which they might attain through the exercise of their higher faculties? It is my hope that you may come to perceive these high truths, Prince Hagen, that you may be taught to admire such high

qualities in the great men of history, and in the ideals of art. For I assure you, when one has once been stirred by such thoughts —"

A Pullman car is an exceedingly unfortunate place to choose for the setting forth of one's ideals. Just then, when I was quite certain that I was carrying everything before me, the conductor tapped me on the shoulder and asked for my ticket; and, after I had disposed of that matter, I was overwhelmed by such a flood of questions, as to the meaning and uses of conductors, the arrangement of sleeping-cars, and the colouredness of their porters, that I had no opportunity to renew the discussion of the high destinies of men. It was not very long before our berth was being put in order, an operation which my companion surveyed with wondering interest that showed me I was quite forgotten.

We reached our destination early the next morning, and, after a breakfast and a cursory inspection of a thousand things in the city about us, we drove out to the boarding-school of Doctor Myer.

He was a white-haired old gentleman, with a benevolent countenance. I felt at the first glance that he was the person to help me in

accomplishing my plans. I introduced my young friend, James Hagen (according to a previous arrangement), as a ward of mine, who, for reasons which we desired not to make public, was ignorant of the most ordinary matters of civilisation, and desired to combine the studies of the school course with a general examination into the things about him. I could see that the good doctor was puzzled, but he welcomed his new pupil kindly. After all matters incidental had been arranged, I rose to take my leave of Hagen, during which ceremony the doctor considerately left the room.

"My dear friend," I said, "I think you should be made quite at home in this place."

"Do I look as if I felt forlorn?" asked the other.

"I am sure," I continued, "that you will find this old gentleman a perfect example of the unselfish kindness of which I have talked to you; and, if you will only meet your classmates half-way, I am very certain you will find more of the same generosity. I leave you here with that hope in my heart."

"I trust so," said Prince Hagen, "and now don't let me keep you from your train."

His reminder was not untimely. I had just chance to request the good doctor to keep me informed as to the progress and the character of his new pupil before I had to hurry off to the depot. By the evening I was back in my little tent once more, as busy as if Prince Hagen had really been but a dream.

When I get fairly to work at my writing, there is nothing else that claims any part of my attention. It was in May that the incidents I have narrated took place; it is in July that the next developments occur. In the meantime, I had heard nothing from my protégé, and had given him not a thought, except in hours of leisure, when I recollected it all and wondered how his affairs were progressing.

I could not get my mail except by going for it, and it was not often I had time for that. I had not seen a letter for a week, when late one afternoon I entered the town, and found two bulky epistles from the doctor, dated several days apart. It was with a sudden awakening of interest that I tore open the earlier of the two. It ran as follows:

"MY DEAR SIR: — I promised to keep you informed about your ward, and I shall take this leisure hour to write you at length.

"I must tell you in the first place that it is a source of endless speculation to me how a person of this lad's rapacious curiosity can, by any possibility, have remained as ignorant about the most elementary things as he is. I sometimes wonder if he may not have been brought up on a desert isle; I presume, however, that there are good reasons for keeping these matters a secret.

"You have brought me a very curious and interesting pupil. He is, in the first place, a person of most tremendous energy; at that which interests him, he will labour with literally untiring persistence; he seems to have no idea of either eating or sleeping until he has learned what he wishes to know. But I am sorry to say that what he does not wish to know there seems to be no earthly possibility of forcing him to study. I have found myself unconsciously treating him differently from my other scholars. He speaks with such serenity and certainty of what he means to do that I am quite amazed at him, and sometimes helpless to oppose him. I have per-

ceived that I should cause much trouble by insisting upon having my way, and, wisely or unwisely, I have always yielded. Young Hagen is so very diligent in studying what he likes, and seems to perceive so clearly what he needs, that one is fatally inclined to be lenient.

"I regret to tell you that the subjects he chooses are very limited in range, and are entirely of the practical kind. He expresses his indifference, with most unbecoming levity, for literature and for all the liberal arts. He has been fascinated by the difficulties of mathematics, but his great forte seems to be for political economy, and for all the practical problems of our present-day life. It has not been my custom to teach matters such as these, but he has induced me to guide him to books that treat of them. According to your request, I endeavoured to care especially for his religious training, in which I found him most lamentably deficient. I cannot discover that it has made any impression upon his heart, however, though the ways of the Lord are sometimes obscure to us, and the workings of His grace not to be foretold.

"I was most cruelly perplexed at first by

the young man's persistent truancy; he takes this way of avoiding all lectures which he does not enjoy, and I have been powerless to prevent him. I feared very much that he was being led into the paths of wickedness, but I found, upon inquiry, that he was in reality diligently informing himself about things of importance; he has visited factories and stores of all kinds, newspaper offices, and railroad depots, and the ships at the wharves. The last time I discovered him, after considerable alarm and anxiety, he was attending the Democratic primary election in our district, and was in deep conversation with some of the officials; nor would he leave at my commands, but forced me to go home in despair. You must write me what to do in matters such as these, for I am often tormented with the fear that I may not be doing my duty in allowing the young man thus to follow his own inclinations.

"Another matter in which I am powerless to control him, has been his hour of retiring; I was very reluctant to break the rules of my establishment in this matter, for it sets a precedent subversive of all discipline. But Hagen has discovered the newspapers and

magazines as an endless source of information about the world around him, and these he reads without end. It is this that causes his late hours, and it appears to be utterly impossible to stem the torrent of his eagerness. I have given up interfering, and only trust that there may be no danger of the eager pupil's injuring his health by his labours.

"There remain but two matters to speak of; one of them, is the young man's relation with his fellow pupils. This seemed to be one of most unaccountable hostility from the outset. Young Hagen seemed to inspire the other boys with aversion, and I was not long in finding that they had come to blows. I was much worried lest they should be attempting to bully him, but I was powerless to find out just how matters stood. I only know that the young man appeared continually marked with the scars of combat, and seemed to grow more and more defiant. Last week the trouble culminated in a continued fracas; he was hurt so badly as to be twice under the doctor's care, and no less than six other pupils were incapacitated from study. My vigorous inquiry could not bring out the truth about the matter, but since then the quarrelling ap-

pears to have ceased. There has been a *rapprochement,* but who has won supremacy I cannot tell.

"And now for the last matter of all. I scarcely know how to speak of this, and I only trust that it will not give offence. It is truly a most dreadful thing. You must consider the fact that you have kept the young man's origin so close a secret as my reason for asking you this question. Not many days after his arrival, there began to be noticed by the boys — I tremble as I write it — the loss of numbers of articles from their rooms. Sums of money were taken on various occasions, and on no less than four, valuable watches and jewelry. No attempts to trace these crimes to any one have been successful, but it has been proved beyond doubt that the author of them must be some one connected with the school. My servants are all known to me, and I hesitate to suspect them. In this most fearful perplexity, I write to ask you in confidence whether there could, by any possibility, be something in the character or in the former life of young Hagen, that would warrant your suspecting him. There is one circumstance, a very slight one, which turned

my thoughts to him. Only write me that there is no reason for having suspicion of him more than of another, and I will dismiss the cruel doubt from my mind. I pray that I may not be angering you by this inquiry.

"I am, sincerely,

"ADOLPH MYER."

Such was the first letter. Without stopping to think an instant, I tore open the second, which I saw from the postmark had been written only the day before.

"MY DEAR SIR: — I scarcely know how to begin to announce to you what I am forced to announce in this letter.

"I shudder when I think of the almost fiendish audacity and wilfulness of this fellow Hagen. I have been praising him for his dutifulness and virtue, and all the time it would seem that the slight restraints which were put upon him have been rousing in his heart a volcano of rage and rebellion! And to-day it has burst, and caused a series of calamities which I think did never before in the world occur to terrify the soul of an unfortunate boarding-school principal. Be-

fore I begin to narrate them, I have to tell you, sir, that you must come, and come immediately, to take James Hagen from this place, or I shall not be answerable for the consequences.

"I wrote you in my former letter that I did not know what had been the result of the contest for supremacy between this fellow and the boys of my school. I know now that it was a complete victory for him, and that it converted them from an assemblage of pupils as studious and gentlemanly as could be found in this land — though I do say it myself — to a horde of demons, subject to the imperious will of this boy. I shall proceed, without further comment, to narrate the events which have occurred at my establishment within the last twenty-four hours.

"I have a teacher, one of my most valued assistants, named Tisdale; this gentleman is a most admirable disciplinarian, able to get more hard work out of a class of boys than any teacher I have ever had occasion to meet with. But he was so unwise, or so unfortunate, as not to approve of the leniency which I displayed to young Hagen, and there had

resulted several violent clashes from his attempts to bend the latter to his will. Since the last, however, the pupil had apologised, and I had concluded that the danger was over.

"Yesterday afternoon he was rebuked by Mr. Tisdale, and immediately answered with an audacious impertinence which completely dumbfounded the teacher. To add to his amazement, the class burst into frantic applause, and, upon young Hagen's being ordered to leave the room, they rose as one man and left with him.

"When this astonishing news reached me, I at once ordered that the pupils be confined to their rooms, to the carrying out of which order no resistance was made. But no sooner had night come than they escaped, and, under the leadership of Hagen, made their way in silence down the hall to the room where Mr. Tisdale slept. The unfortunate gentleman, having no thought of danger, had left his door unlocked, and so they secured admission unperceived. They laid hands upon him, and carried him bodily out into the hall, tying him, clad as he was in his *robe-de-nuit,* to the post of the banister. I had no hope of

discovering the perpetrators of this outrage, doubting not that, under the malignant influence of Hagen, they would all deny their guilt. Therefore, you may imagine my consternation at what followed on the following morning, when Hagen arose, and, with an insolent smile, announced that he had been the leader and originator of the whole trouble. Enraged at this, I threatened him with instant expulsion, upon which he laughed and coolly declared that he had done what he had because he was ready to leave, having learned all that we had to teach him!

"I concluded at last not to go as far as to have the rascal arrested, but I made up my mind instantly that I would not do what the fellow expected, and turn him away. I gave orders to have him confined, which was managed after a desperate struggle. I now write to say that I give you two days to come and take him in charge. If you do not come, or send, by that time, I shall very certainly allow Mr. Tisdale to have him arrested.

"Further comment on these matters is unnecessary. His most dreadful outburst will no doubt be described in all the papers to-

morrow, and I fear that the Myer Academy may never recover from the disgrace of it all.

"I am, sir, respectfully,

"ADOLPH MYER."

I make no attempt to describe my emotions at the reading of those letters. When I was at the height of my excitement and wonder, an acquaintance chanced to pass, and called out to me: "Oh, by the way, they told me at the depot that a telegram came for you last night." I knew in an instant where it was from, and rushed down there. When I had got the message and torn it open, I read this:

"Hagen has made his escape threatening watchers with revolver cannot find him police notified will wire news.

"A. MYER."

This last settled the matter. When I recovered from my consternation, I could only call myself names for my folly in meddling with the fate of this boy, or man, or devil. I had been fairly warned about him, I said, and it was only my stupid presumption that

had got me into the trouble. I exclaimed to myself that now, when they caught him — as they surely would — I would tell who he was, and have old King Alberich take him back, and so wash my hands of the whole affair. "In the meantime," I vowed, "I will not take it upon myself to worry about him."

And with this virtuous resolution, I turned and made my way down to the boat. I was talking half-aloud, as is my wont, and I remember that I had got so far as to observe: "In truth, he *is* a very demon!" And then suddenly I heard a step behind me, and a merry laugh, and a voice, crying: "Wait a minute there, old chap; what's the hurry?" I whirled about in consternation, — it was Prince Hagen!

I think that I stood spellbound for at least a minute; during the time my mouth and eyes must have been wide open, for the other shook with laughter in every part of his frame as he gazed at me.

"Prince Hagen!" I panted, finally.

"James," he said, correcting me, "James Hagen." And then crouching suddenly with

mock alarm, he whispered, gazing around him: "Hist! the police!"

And then he burst into pealing laughter. I stared at him, still half-dazed; but, as gradually I recovered my self-possession, I felt decidedly otherwise than merry. I was vigorously incensed at his conduct, and was determined that nothing should prevent my speaking my mind.

"I am astonished," I exclaimed, "that you are not ashamed to return to me after your disgraceful behaviour."

"You think it disgraceful?" he asked.

"I most certainly do," I declared; "so disgraceful that I cannot bear to think of it."

"Then I wouldn't," said he, grimly.

I eyed him in silent wonder. "Why have you returned?" I asked, at last.

"I came back to tell you I was through with school," he answered, smiling.

"You are certainly through with *that* school," said I.

"I am through with any," he added; "my education is now complete."

I did not think it necessary to reply. "And then you are going home?" I asked, a trifle anxiously, I fear.

"Home?" he exclaimed. "Not much! I am just ready to begin seeing the world."

I stopped in my walk, and I stood gazing at him for at least half a minute. Then I said, very sternly: "Prince Hagen, listen to me. You are going back to Nibelheim."

He opened his eyes. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean," I replied, "that I am determined not to be the cause of casting such a man as you loose upon the world. I am going to see you again under your grandfather's control."

He was leaning back upon his cane, twiddling his watch-chain, and eyeing me quizzically; his whole form seemed to shake with his silent laughter, as I made that solemn statement. "And pray," he asked, "suppose I refuse to go?"

"In that case, I will call the aid of the law."

"And upon what grounds will the law assist you?"

"That you are my ward; that I was given control over you by your grandfather."

"Ah, yes," said he, "and when the question

comes to be argued, pray how old will you say I am?"

"Nineteen or twenty," I answered.

"Indeed!" he responded. "Do you know, I thought I was much older. I believed I had lived seven or eight hundred years."

"That is all quibbling!" I cried, angrily. "You know that in your Nibelung measurement you are still a minor, and therefore —"

"I have been reading your laws with interest," put in Prince Hagen, gravely, "but I have not as yet found any provision for the reduction of Nibelung ages to the scale of your own."

"I shall explain the circumstances," I said, trying not to show my annoyance.

"Ah, yes," laughed he, "you will explain that I am a Nibelung. But are you sure everybody will believe you?"

"I can prove it," I said; "you will not dare deny —"

"On the contrary," observed Hagen, "I shall laugh at it as most ridiculous nonsense."

He looked at me a moment, shaking again with delight. "I have been inquiring into some of your writings," he said, "and I see you're an eccentric sort of a chap, very much

given to enthusiasms. Also, if I understand it, your reputation for veracity is not quite at par as it is; and now how'd you like to have the reviewers get you down as 'the man who's been in Nibelheim?'"

I shuddered; I could not help it; and my tormentor grinned. "Come, old boy," he said, "listen to reason awhile. You seem to be very anxious to have charge of me; I'm sure I can't tell just why, for I've lived many hundreds of years more than you, and I know more than you ever would if you lived thousands. Now, take my advice, and give up the game, and don't get into trouble; you can't control me, and you'll only make me angry. You see, I started out taking your rainbow estimates of life, and now I've found out the truth about it myself, and I'm ready to go it on my own hook. I suppose it was very wicked of me not to stay at school, and have my head stuffed with Latin conjugations and sawdust, but I'm afraid I was born bad."

I had silently made up my mind, somewhat to my chagrin, that Prince Hagen was right in advising me to let him alone; I thought it best to drop the question at once. "You were not pleased with your surroundings?"

I asked. "Doctor Myer's kindness had no effect upon you?"

"Kindness!" snorted he. "The old sap-head! And those boys — oh, say, but I had fun thinking of those words of yours about the Christian love and fellowship of those boys! I was smaller than they, and they thought at first that they could bully me, and laugh at me because I was ugly; but, by the Lord, I fought 'em — I fought 'em day and night, and I fought 'em all around the place. And when they found they couldn't beat me, they came at me in twos and threes, and I fought 'em that way; I fought 'em after they had knocked me down, and I hated 'em so that I'd have fought 'em after I was dead. And when I'd mastered every man who dared to look at me, you should have seen how they cringed and toadied! And they hated the slavery they lived in, but there wasn't a man among 'em had dared raise a finger. When I did it, oh, it was wonderful, I tell you, to see how brave they were! Now I suppose they're all snivelling again, and repenting, and licking old Tisdale's boots!"

"I suppose you are not repenting?" I asked, after a moment's pause.

"Repenting!" snapped Prince Hagen, fiercely; "I'd have poked that man's eyes out, if it wouldn't have scared the rest!"

I said nothing; after a time the other went on, laughing. "No, my good friend," he said, "I'm through being brought up in the paths of virtue. I'm going to try the world on my own plan now."

"And pray what is that?" I asked.

My companion thought for a moment.

"Did you ever read anything about Napoleon?" he demanded, suddenly.

"I know about him," I said.

"I have read every word concerning him that I could find," said Hagen, "and I tell you, *that* is what I call a man! Why, it makes your blood boil to read of it! And all of it began from nothing; it was just the force of one will. Oh, just you wait, and give me a chance at it!"

Prince Hagen's hands were clenched convulsively, and his nostrils quivered; then he broke into a laugh.

"Do you expect to be an emperor?" I asked, mildly.

"The military ideal is heroic, because there is no cringing in it," he replied; "but, un-

fortunately, it is not possible in these days; the mass of the people here have to be fooled. It all comes to the same thing in the end, of course, — the world is just as much the prey of the man who can master it as it ever was. I see these millions of maudlin fools, with no brains to think, and no souls to dare, and I tell you I'll rule them or die! Only wait! Only wait! I have ten times their cleverness, and a hundred times their force! I'm not afraid, and they are, and I know what I want, and they don't! So only give me time!"

He had been speaking swiftly; I was watching him with deep interest. His jaws were clenched, and his brows knit, and there was a dull gleam in his eyes. "Only wait!" he muttered again, half to himself. "Time! Time!"

"What are you going to do?" I asked, curiously. "How shall you begin? Are you going into business, to become a capitalist?"

"It's too slow," he answered, hastily. "Too slow! I've thought of it all, and there's only one way for a man in my position. I shall make the plunge to-morrow, — I'm going into politics."

"Into politics!" I gasped.

"Yes," he reiterated, "just so."

"But, Prince Hagen," I objected, "it takes influence to succeed in politics."

He looked up at me sharply. "You think I won't succeed, do you?" he asked.

"I do not know," I said; "I fear not."

"Perhaps," he said, and he smiled calmly. "But I'll try it! I leave for New York to-night."

"Democrat or Republican?" I inquired.

"Democrat," was the reply; "you have to have money to be a Republican. I shall be an alderman, or worse, I promise you, by election after next."

"I do not think it is possible," I answered.

"Don't you?" said Hagen. "Suppose I tell you how I mean to do it."

"Go ahead," I replied; "I am curious to hear."

"Well," said he, "in the first place I shall be a member of Tammany Hall before I have been in the city an hour, and then I shall set to work making friends; in a few days I shall pick out the district that suits me, and give the leader a good dinner; and after it is over, I'll open on him like this: 'You've an election coming in a few months, and you are

going to be pushed like the devil, and you know it. Now I'm going into politics as a business, and give all my time to it. I'm not making any bluffs; I'm out for the dust, and I'm going to get it. I'll give you first chance for a good worker, if you want one. I can do what I'm told to do, and there isn't anything I'm afraid of; I can be trusted with any money given me, and I can shut up like a mouse-trap when it's necessary. I've got a clever tongue in my head, as you see, and I can make friends with the best. I don't know anything about the issues, but I know all the phrases, and I can talk along a crowd to make you open your eyes. I don't want anything but to work night and day, and I am ready to begin right now. I don't want any money; I only want to show what I can do, and when I've shown you, you can give me what I'm worth, and I won't forget it. And now, say the word.' Is there anything impossible about *that?*"

I was obliged to confess that there wasn't, so far as my slight knowledge went.

"No," said Prince Hagen, "and by the time election day comes, I'll be a bigger man in that district than the leader, and the next

year I'll be Alderman Jimmy O'Hagen, with three music-halls, a gambling-place, and a dozen saloons with hotels up-stairs; and then I'll be on the way to the top, and I promise you that, when I once get going, the devil himself won't stop me."

"You'll be President last of all, I suppose," I asked, dryly.

"No," was the grim response, "I want none of the shams; but I'll be the man who *makes* the President, and the man whom the President obeys."

I was silent for a long time after that. The other was eyeing me with amusement. "And what says my virtuous idealist?" he asked, "shall I succeed?"

"I fear you may," I said.

"And all your sublimities?"

"Do not worry about the sublimities," I responded. "You may succeed, you may be the mightiest power in the land; but I assure you no true men will respect you."

He laughed in my face. "Do you suppose I want that?" he snapped. "That would be to make them my equals; what is contempt but impotent hatred? I don't want them to respect me — I want them to *fear* me, I want

them to *obey* me; do you think they might do *that?*"

He paused for a moment, and I sat lost in thought. During our discussion we had been strolling slowly down the road. "Let us not go any farther," he said; "it is almost time I was going back to the depot."

I started from the revery into which his words had thrown me; he stood leaning against a tree, with the rays of the evening sun gleaming about him. I fixed my eyes on his face, but he did not avert his gaze; he only smiled, for he was very sure of himself, and strong.

"No, no, my friend," he said, with a quiet laugh, "the millions — I leave all the sublimities and renunciations to them; I do not come of their race, and I do not love their virtues. But oh, if you think they won't flatter me and honour me! If you think they won't bow down to me as a god! Mark what I tell you, — what I tell you now, while I am young and it takes daring to prophesy, — I shall some day stand on the top of this civilisation of yours, and then just watch me, you who spend your time dreaming about the wonderful goodness of men! Maybe I'll write you a

line once in awhile, and tell you how things are going; or pay me a call in the city, and you'll see. I sha'n't make any pretences, I'll tell every man what I am; and if I'm not received by the highest and honoured with the best, if your newspapers aren't filled with me, and your society doesn't invite me, and your great men don't banquet me, and your people don't cheer for me; if I don't live in a palace, and entertain like a king, and rule like an emperor; if I do not go where I please, and do what I please, and command *whom* I please, — you may send me back to school, good friend, and turn me into a choir-boy!"

And those were the last words I heard from Prince Hagen for a long time. He turned and strode away, with a mocking gesture.

CHAPTER III.

THE author waves his magic wand and invites the reader to transport himself over four months of time.

It was the first day of November, and I was still in my mountain home, a removal from the tent to a cottage with a warm fireplace having made it possible for me to remain and witness the last rites of the dying summer. But now the time had come when cold winds and rain made it impossible for the most obstinate friend of nature to stay longer, and on that day I was again in the village, intending to inquire for some one to move my trunks, and to leave for the city by an early morning train.

I had, in the meantime, heard not a word more of Prince Hagen, though in hours of leisure I had often wondered how his bold plans were succeeding. It was therefore with a start of excitement that I fell to reading a letter, which, upon the first glance, I

discovered to be from him. "My dearly beloved Idealist!" it began.

"I wonder," he wrote, "if you are curious about the adventures of your schoolboy friend; it is a rainy day, and I am waiting here in a hotel for a man with whom I have an engagement; I will scribble you a line. My thoughts turn sometimes to you and your prophecies. You must know that I am in the swim, and swimming like a porpoise. I beg leave to introduce myself as a duly elected member of Tammany Hall, a district worker of distinction, and a campaign orator of amazing prestige. I do all the secret jobs, and the money I take in and pay out would make your hair stand on end if I told you, — which I sha'n't. If you could only have seen me all summer visiting the sick and the halt, carrying free ice and free coal and free words of comfort everywhere! During the summer I gave an excursion, and the quantities of beer which I contributed to the edification of humanity shall be a thing unmentioned.

"You may know — you do, because you get the papers up in your wilderness — that we are in the midst of an election-campaign down here, and that things are fairly humming.

What you may *not* know is, that your aspiring friend has created a sensation, has electrified audience after audience, — is more in demand than the candidates themselves, travels all over the city, and makes six speeches a night, and is generally having a hilarious adventure. Whether this letter will come back to find you in New York, I do not know, but in case it should, I enclose you a ticket for a shindig, — you may sit up on the platform if you come, just as if you were a person of importance.

"Yours,

"JIMMIE O'HAGEN.

"P. S. I shall not write to you again until I am Judge O'Hagen; I have decided that pays better than alderman."

Such was the letter; the ticket read as follows:

GRAND MASS-MEETING
of the
REGULAR DEMOCRATS
of the
Four Hundred and Fourth Ward!!
Citizens Assemble!

Assert the rights of the poor!!
Down with the capitalists!!!

Spread-Eagle Hall, November 2d, at 8 P. M.

The speakers will be: *Hon. Timothy Flaherty*, *Hon. Brutus O'Grady*, *Judge Patrick Mooney*, *Mr. James O'Hagen.*

Admit One. Platform Entrance.
WELCOME!

I found this a very interesting document, and it took me but a moment to calculate that my train reached New York at nine in the evening, and that, with a cab, I could reach Spread-Eagle Hall in half an hour more. I made up my mind then and there that, barring accidents, I would hear that campaign speech of "Jimmie O'Hagen."

As I went back to my boat, and as I rowed homeward, I mused about the wonderfulness of it all. It was funny; and yet I could not but shudder as I thought of the fierce determination of this man, who acted as he did in spite of what I knew to be his fiery hatred of trivial and humiliating things. I was more than eager to know more about his adventures, and to watch his future; while I packed my

trunks that night, I could think about nothing but "Jimmie O'Hagen."

The fact that my mind was so preoccupied with him, made me at first mistake what occurred later that evening for a delusion of my own fancy; it must have been about midnight, and everything about me had been silent as the grave, when suddenly I was startled by a faint sound of music, — the same dancing theme that had first heralded Prince Hagen's approach. I own that I trembled, and that I clutched at a chair while I listened; and when I heard a faint tap on the door, my heart gave an unpleasant thump, and my knees trembled visibly.

On the table lay a revolver, and I gripped that, holding it in my pocket; but even then it took all my resolution to go to the door. Outside it was so dark I could see nothing at first, and I stood waiting, my blood still throbbing wildly, until at last there outlined itself on the piazza a tiny figure, with two sparkling, beady eyes. I knew that it was one of the Nibelungs. I was relieved that it was not Hagen.

"What do you want?" I asked, controlling my voice with an effort.

The stranger did not answer at once, and I stepped back into the room. "Come in," I said, "if you wish."

The Nibelung came as near as the doorway, and there stood, twisting in his hands his little furry cap, and gazing at me under his wizened eyebrows.

"What is it you wish?" I asked.

"Prince Hagen was here?" he demanded, in a quaint little voice.

"Yes," I said.

"Where is he now?"

"He is not here, he went away. He is in the city."

The man stood twisting his cap more nervously than ever.

"You wish to see him?" I asked.

"Yes," said he, "the people wish to see him."

"Why?" I asked; "is anything the matter?"

"Yes, very much the matter. He is needed. He must be king. Alberich is dead."

And I gave a leap as if I had been shot at.

"Alberich dead!" I exclaimed, in consternation.

"Yes," was the reply, "he died last night."

I was staring at the little creature blankly; I could not realise the truth. "Alberich dead!" I repeated, faintly, and half-mechanically. "Alberich dead!"

"You know where Prince Hagen is?" asked the Nibelung, quickly.

"Yes," I said, "I know."

"And will you tell him to come?"

"I will," I replied.

"All right," said the Nibelung; "tell him to come quickly; the people want him." And then he turned and vanished in the darkness without a sound.

I sat down in the chair, and stared into the flickering fire. "Alberich is dead!" I whispered to myself, half-dazed. "King Alberich is dead!"

I was now, of course, obliged to go and see Prince Hagen immediately upon my arrival in the city; I saw that it was upon me that the task of breaking this dreadful news devolved. I thought of the fact that he had been his grandfather's dearest care for long centuries, that these two had lived together

in their caves for seven or eight hundred years. "Even amid their pitiful search for gold," I mused, "it cannot be but that there was affection. Death is a dreadful thing." I shuddered as I thought of having to take Prince Hagen such a message, just at the time of the triumph of his unclean ambition.

Meditating these matters, I passed a day upon the train, and, as night fell, I found myself in New York. The noise and confusion of the city, as it burst upon me after my long sojourn in the wilderness, made it seem to me a very inferno, but I had no time to think about it. I caught a cab, and set out at full speed for Spread-Eagle Hall.

I had, on the way, ample evidence that the city was in the midst of its annual election throes. It was the year of a great Presidential contest; the universe was rent in twain, and brethren disputed with brethren about incomprehensible matters. As I drove down a brilliantly-lighted thoroughfare, I could see that it was crowded with people, and whenever I thrust out my head, I saw that campaign-banners filled the air. I heard once and again the strains of a brass band, and a score of times I was whirled past a corner where an excited

orator held forth from the back of a wagon. I had a feeling as if I were approaching a field of battle, and would soon reach the firing-line and the smoke of the conflict.

I knew where Spread-Eagle Hall was, a large theatre-building on a disreputable part of the Bowery. As the cab whirled around a corner, I heard a hoarse murmur, that told me I was near to a crowd of men; at the same time the driver reined up his horse.

"What's the matter?" I asked. "We're a block away yet."

"Can't help it," was the reply. "Can't get any nearer."

And then I leaned out and saw that the street was packed with a mass of human beings. Traffic was stopped, and a long line of cars stretched past me.

I paid my fare and descended. I could see the hall, gleaming with lights, ahead of me; being bent upon seeing Hagen, I made several plunges into the crowd, but only to be beaten back. Finally I espied a policeman, and got out my ticket.

"Officer," I said, "I must get into the hall."

"It can't be done," he answered.

"But this ticket!"

"Can't help it."

"But I must see James O'Hagen on important business immediately!" I exclaimed. The man only shook his head.

"You'll see him as quickly here as anywheres," he said.

And I was forced to content myself with that. I gazed about me in the meantime at the crowd, a motley assemblage, made up of every type imaginable; once in a while they shouted and whistled, but for the most part they stood patiently waiting. I waited also, and meanwhile listened to the conversation of two individuals beside me.

"Did yez ever hear him?" asked one.

"Heard him twice last night," said the other. "Ain't he great?"

"Dey must be raisin' de deuce inside dere; listen!"

There came a hoarse murmur from the direction of the hall; the mob outside thrilled in sympathy. "O'Hagen!" shouted voices, "O'Hagen!"

"He'll be out soon," said the man beside me; "an' there'll be fun. 'Ray fer de Democrats!"

"Dey should have put him on de ticket!" declared his companion, excitedly. "O'Hagen! O'Hagen! 'Ray! 'Ray!"

"So what he said is really true," I mused, as I stood there. "He is mounting with the best of them! And I coming to him with this news of death!"

While I was still whispering that, I heard a prolonged uproar from within. It was a frantic cheering, continued and continued, seeming as if it would never end; it caught the crowd about me, and they, too, broke into shouts of impatience. "Oh, but he must be givin' it to 'em!" yelled the man beside me. "'Ray for O'Hagen!"

And then suddenly, with a burst of light, the doors of Spread-Eagle Hall were flung open, and the cheering surged out like the rolling of a wave; the mob in the street took it up, and the air rang with a deafening uproar. It reached its frantic pitch a moment later, as half a dozen men appeared in the doorway. The people leaped up and down, waving their hats and howling until they could howl no more.

"It's O'Hagen!" was the cry. "It's O'Hagen! He's going to speak!"

It was at least two or three minutes before this excitement showed any signs of diminution. When at last things were quieter, a man stepped up on a raised platform in full view of every eye. The mob gave a howl.

"It's Paddy Mooney," I heard the man beside me cry. "'Ray for Mooney!"

"Naw," cried the other, "who wants to hear him? Git down out o' that! Give us O'Hagen!"

The rest seemed to be of a mind with the sentiment. They howled and howled; and when Judge Mooney (who was a stout and pompous and exceedingly red-faced judge indeed) began, solemnly: "Feller citizens, ladies and gennelmen —" they only shrieked the louder, "O'Hagen! O'Hagen! Give us O'Hagen!"

The unfortunate orator fought that storm for at least a minute, but it got fiercer and fiercer, and he had to yield. The cries of "O'Hagen!" continued, and at last another figure rose beside that of the judge. I knew it in an instant; it was Prince Hagen, otherwise Jimmie O'Hagen, now the King of the Nibelungs.

He stretched out his hand; the crowd gave

one yell of joy, and then was silent as the night. Thus, and thus only, Judge Mooney got his chance to say, as solemnly as ever:

"Feller citizens, ladies and gennelmen, it affords me great pleasure fer to introjuce to you the orator of the evenin' — Mr. — James — O'Hagen!"

And then "Paddy Mooney" sat down, and the crowd had another burst of excitement. I saw Prince Hagen standing there aloft, conscious of his power, and proud of it, smiling and nodding to right and left, shaking hands with all whom he could reach, and patted on the back by all who could reach him. I noticed, too, that in contrast to "the judge" he was not clad in evening dress, which I took to be part of a system of democratic good-fellowship.

Meanwhile the mob yelled and yelled until it was hoarse. When at last Prince Hagen raised his hands and they became silent, he said, with the utmost good nature: "I've all sorts of important things to tell you, if you'll only give me a chance;" at which they yelled louder than ever.

Pretty soon he began his speech, and I listened with eagerness. For I was curious to

know how this thing had come about. I wanted to see Prince Hagen's plans in action.

As it proved, the secret of his success was not hard to discover.

I have sometimes dreamed of the poet, as one who stands upon the mountain-tops and sees the vast pageant of life roll by him; and the music of it is like thunder, and he is mad with the joy of it as he moulds it into words; but always he is the lord of it, and plays with it, and, as he sweeps himself on in the surge of it, he laughs at each success. All of that, in his way, was Prince Hagen, and the daring of his ways, the reckless abandon of his soul, was almost sublime. He seemed to know that he had those men in his hands; and just what he chose for them to do they did. If any one interrupted him, friend or foe, he had a retort as quick as lightning, and a laugh of glee besides, to show how easy it was. It set the audience wild, and drove the orator yet faster. When he began to build up a climax, to feel the crowd about you was like watching a tempest gathering on the hilltops. If he went mad with wrath, gesticulated and shouted until he broke down and went to pieces, it made not the least difference in the world,

for by that time the crowd had caught the delirium, and drowned out his words and his shouts with their own hoarse murmurs. He wrought them up to such a pitch that, if he had burst into song and chanted his deliverance, I verily believe no one would have thought it strange.

The matter of it all was money and the trusts; and he was a veritable prophet, with a soul on fire with rage. He showed how this monster was enclosing our whole civilisation in its grasp, mastering society and turning the labour of all men to its own foul uses; he showed how the capitalists owned the railroads, the telegraphs, the factories, the stores; and the fearful iniquity of it all he pictured so vividly that it made his audience shudder. It was a sudden flash of light into the very vitals of our society; and it startled the spellbound crowd with thoughts that never before had come to them, — that for this huge injustice of society there was no *reason,* that it might be abolished, that all men *might* be their own masters, and that poverty and disease and suffering might no more soil the fair earth of God.

"We stand here free men," cried the orator,

"brothers and friends; we are not slaves, we are not idlers; we earn our bread, and why should we not have it? Do you ever realise, gentlemen, that it lies with you — with *you,* a sovereign people — to throttle this loathsome serpent? Will you lie here in the grasp of it, when you have but to assert your strength? The government of this country is made by *you;* the laws of this country are what *you* wish them to be! If the capitalist is your master, it is because he corrupts your legislators with his ill-gotten gains; it is because he blinds you with his threats of social upheaval, because he makes you believe that he and his iniquities are God's eternal necessities; it is because to-day the party which follows his flag can fight with his unbounded wealth and with the prestige of the great names of the land; because the employer can bully his men; because the capitalist can threaten the newspapers, and bribe the voters, and corrupt the very agents of the law. And amid all this, there is no man dares see the truth, dares brave the tyrant, and bid the people be free! Oh, my friends, I ask you if it be not true? You Americans, inheritors of the glorious principles of freedom that Wash-

ington fought for and Jefferson laid down, you work where you are bid to work, and for what the capitalist may choose to pay you. The street-cars you ride on belong to the capitalist, the house you live in, the gas you burn; the very food in your mouths and the clothes on your backs are made from the capitalist's materials, and with the capitalist's wealth. And the capitalist lives on Fifth Avenue, rolling in his wealth, or idles in his private yacht, mocking at all your hatred! I look around me in simple wonder that in a land where the people rule such things should have come to be. But I fix my eyes upon the future, when this veil of lies shall be torn away, when the people shall rise like a young lion in its wrath, and fasten its teeth in the throat of this iniquity. I look for the time when citizens shall have learned that the labour of man is for his own wealth, and not for another's! I go abroad and I cry this truth from the housetops; I shout it into the ears of men! I say unto you, citizens and free men who stand about me, that you — *you* are masters of society — that *you* are the government — that justice is yours if you wish it — that you have only to see and know, and be free! And I

leave you with the solemn warning that, if you are not all in this world that you wish to be, if you have not all in this world that you wish to have, the fault can be but your own!"

And this was the matter of Prince Hagen's speech. Of the manner I can give no idea — its fierce energy and its thundering wrath. The orator wrought up his audience as if they were going to battle, so that toward the end of his speech both they and he were almost incoherent with excitement; he waved his hands and raged like a madman, and his audience drowned his words in their yells and applause. When he finished, it seemed as if he needed only to have given the word to begin a riot; and, as it was, the mob broke out into a shout like the rolling of thunder, and bore down upon the platform, and caught the orator on their shoulders, and carried him about in triumph. The band in the hall struck up at full force, and the fireworks flamed from the platform, and for full five minutes there was pandemonium let loose; to all of it I was a wondering spectator, being concerned about only one thing else — not to lose sight of Hagen.

When at last the excited crowd had scat-

tered somewhat, I saw the man make his way into a saloon which stood next to the hall, and there I followed him. The place was crowded to suffocation with a noisy, dirty crowd of men, but I pushed my way in resolutely. I made out that the district headquarters of the organisation were located in this building, and that here the orator of the evening was receiving the congratulations of his fellow workers and friends. And it was a royal welcome, too; the place was echoing with his name, with cheers and excited exclamations, and the crowd would have kept him on its shoulders still if he had not deprecatingly prevented them.

I did not care to obtrude myself into these festivities with my dire tidings, and so I waited until the noise had subsided. When, finally, I came forward, Prince Hagen was still surrounded by a crowd of men, but he saw me and forced his way out, laughing merrily.

"You were there?" he exclaimed. "I looked for you. And how did you like my speech?"

"Very interesting," I said, seeing that the

others were looking at me; and then, very gravely, Prince Hagen winked one eye.

"Allow me to introduce you to my friends," he said, facing about. "This is Judge Mooney; Judge Mooney, my friend, Mr. Virtus Semper."

"I am most happy fer to meet a friend of Mr. O'Hagen's," said Judge Mooney, solemnly, squeezing my hand. "Beg pardon, phwat was the name?"

"Er — Semper," I stammered, inwardly anathematising Prince Hagen, who beamed at me.

"And Mr. Daniel O'Rafferty," he continued, "and Mr. Leary, the leader of our district; and Mr. John Grady, a member of our campaign committee. Gentlemen, my friend, Mr. Semper."

I bowed in general, and conversation was resumed. "Mr. O'Hagen is one of our most promisin' orators," whispered Judge Mooney to me. "A most extra-ordinary young feller — most extra-ordinary."

"Yes," said I, vaguely; all the time I was thinking of one thing, — the tidings I had to convey, and how it was to be done. I waited until a moment when the Nibelung had

turned aside from the group to take a glass of water from the bar; then I said: "Prince Hagen, may I speak with you a moment?"

"Certainly," he said, with some surprise. "Excuse me just a second, friends." And we moved over toward the corner of the room.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Prince Hagen," I began, slowly, "I have come to bring you some news — news, I fear, that is very dreadful — "

I stopped; he gazed at me in wonder. "What in the world do you mean?" he asked.

"I scarcely know how to tell you," I replied, tremblingly.

"What is it?" he cried, impatiently.

"It is King Alberich," I said, "he — "

And Hagen gave a wild start. "He — *what?*"

"He is *dead*," I said.

It was frightful to see the effect of those three words upon the man; he turned an ashen gray, and gave a quick shudder, as if in mortal pain. He leaped at me, his eyes gleaming, and caught me convulsively by the arm.

"No!" he panted, hoarsely, "*No!*"

"It is true," I said, faintly.

"Who told you?"

"A Nibelung came."

The man leaped back, and a look crossed his face such as I had never seen on a human countenance before, and hope never to see again. It was a look of wild, drunken, ecstatic rapture; he clenched his hands once or twice, gasping; and then he raised his arms, and a peal of almost hysterical laughter burst from his lips and fairly shook the room.

Every man in the place turned and stared at him; and he laughed and laughed, like a drunken man, like a crazy man; and then he began pacing the floor like a caged beast, swiftly and silently, seeking in vain some vent for his devouring emotion.

"He is dead!" he gasped, choking. "Oh, oh! It is mine! It is mine! Victory! *Victory!* VICTORY!"

He spread out his arms, and his voice rose to a thundering, triumphant shout. And then he sank down and buried his head in his arms on the table, convulsed with incoherent laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he gasped. "Ha, ha, ha! Only think of it! Only think of it! I am free! I am master! It is mine — infinite

millions, that no man has ever counted — mine — mine! And the victory! Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, God, what shall I do? how could I have guessed it? It is triumph! it is glory! it is the world! I am king! I am king! *King!* KING!"

And again he rose and stretched his arms, his chest heaving and his eyes on fire. The men thought he was mad, and I was shuddering; still he laughed on, "Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! Make way for Hagen! *Hagen!*"

Then suddenly, as if remembering where he was, he whirled about, his face gleaming.

"Boys! Boys!" he cried, "say something to me — shout, some of you — I shall burst! Oh, — oh, ho, ho! — think of it — it is mine!"

"What is the matter?" cried one of them, in wonder.

"It's a fortune!" cried Hagen. "I've inherited a fortune! Oh, millions, millions of it! Ha, ha, ha!"

A thrill went through the crowd; they understood now; and still the madman was pacing up and down the room, singing, shouting, gesticulating, slapping the men upon the

back, tears in his eyes and wild, unquenchable laughter pealing from his lips. "Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! Free! Free! Mine — *mine — the world is mine!*"

And then again he flung about and turned to the crowd. "Shout, won't you?" he cried. "Cheer me! Help me! Set 'em up, boys; let's have a drink!"

The silence of the crowd had only been for wonder, for the man's very presence made you thrill like electricity. Some one gave a yell, "Three cheers for O'Hagen! Hooray!" And the crowd took it up, and the mob outside took it up, and the air shook with it. And Hagen seized a decanter of liquor, and poured huge draughts of it down his throat; and the men lifted him on their shoulders as he drank, and bore him about, still shrieking and gasping, his face still alive with his demoniac laughter. Outside, the band, informed no doubt of the tidings, struck up a tune, the blare of which mingled with the din and gave pace to it, so that the men began to march; and Hagen, drunk with ecstasy, took up the song: "Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light!" The whole company joined him and sang it to the end with

mad fervour; it was a fearful, fearful scene, and I buried my head in my hands by a table and waited, shuddering, until it should be over. But I have to confess that I was completely overpowered by this man's audacity, that I cared about nothing in the world so much as to know what he would do.

A new development came very swiftly; the song was scarce over, the men were still shouting and carousing, when suddenly I heard Hagen's voice give an exclamation. I looked up and saw that he had sprung to the floor and was darting toward me; he leaned over the table, his eager face and his burning eyes close to mine.

"Tell me," he whispered, "quick! What time does that night train leave for your place?"

"Ten minutes to twelve," I said, mechanically, and heard him give a gasp.

"There is time to-night," he panted. "Come!"

On the wall was a clock, showing that it was a few minutes after ten; Hagen seized me by the arm, and together we made for the door. He took out a roll of bills, and flung some to the bartender, calling, "Pay

yourself;" and to the rest he shouted, "Good-bye, boys, I'll see you later!" And then in a second more we were in the street.

"In the first place, some clothes!" he muttered. "Confound my stupidity!"

I did not understand him, but he dragged me along, in the meantime talking excitedly to himself. Before very long, we came to a tailor-shop, which was open that night on account of the crowd. The proprietor was in the doorway, and my companion seized him by the arm and dragged him in.

"Got a dress suit?" he asked.

"Yes," answered the man, in wonder.

"One to fit me?"

"I guess so, but —"

"Quick!" panted Hagen. "Don't lose an instant! I'll pay you what you want. Find one!"

The man dived into a pile of clothes. "I think this —" he began.

"Size?" demanded Hagen; and when the man gave it, he added: "That'll do. How much?"

"Fifty dollars."

"All right," said the other; "now a shirt,

and the rest of the stuff! Have you got such things?"

"I don't sell —" began the tailor.

"Any of your own?" cried Hagen. "Ask what you will!"

Then he turned to me. "Call a cab," he cried, "quick!"

I ran outside, doing as I was told without protest. There was a cab at the corner, and I hailed it; by the time it was at the store, Hagen had rushed out with an armful of clothing, which he flung inside.

"Quick!" he exclaimed; "jump in!"

I leaped in, and Hagen stopped only to give the driver the destination. I heard it, and I gave a wild gasp — "Twenty-third Street. Republican Headquarters!" Then the door slammed, and we were off.

"Give you five dollars if you make it in fifteen minutes!" yelled Hagen out of the window, and then sunk back, and began simply tearing off his clothes.

I was breathless with wonder and amazement at all this; but Hagen did not stop to enlighten me. "Quick!" he exclaimed. "Help me on with these togs. It'll be job enough for two in the dark."

I set to work mechanically. The adjusting of that shirt was a labour to be remembered, with the cab thumping along like mad, swaying this way and that, as the driver swept around the corners. In the meantime, Hagen was still talking swiftly to himself, now and then bursting out as before into mad explosions of laughter.

"Tell me," I managed to stammer at last, "what are you going to do?"

"Do!" he echoed. ("Look out for that collar button!) Can't you understand what I'm going to do?"

"No," I said, "I must confess I cannot."

"Humph!" said Hagen. ("Can you tie one of those plagued ties?) I should think you might. Don't you know that I'm a capitalist now myself?"

I stopped what I was doing, and stared at him in blank helplessness.

"Go on!" he cried, swiftly. "The tie!"

"But Prince Hagen!" I exclaimed. "Your principles! The people have heard you — the reporters — the papers!"

"Fool!" said he. "Wait!"

I said no more, but tied the tie, and otherwise adjusted him. By the time that difficult

task was all completed, the cab had come to a sudden stop, and we saw that we were in front of the great hotel where the Republican Headquarters were located. Hagen leaped out, paid the driver, and turned to me.

"Look me over," he said, hastily.

We were under an electric light, and I surveyed his attire. "All right," I said, and then he clenched his hands tightly and bit his lips.

"I must not look excited," he said; and then we sauntered into the hotel. Hagen went straight to the desk.

"Mr. Weazel in?" he asked.

"Yes," said the clerk.

"I wish to see him at once."

"He is busy, sir," was the reply; "he is in consultation with the State Committee. It will be impossible for any one to see him now."

"Humph!" said Hagen. "I shall see him. Can you send up my card?"

"Yes," said the clerk, "but it won't do any good."

"Wait," said Hagen, and turned away into the writing-room. "Listen," he said to me, as we walked. "Have you a check-book?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Can I use it?" he asked.

"You can use it," I said, wonderingly, "but you have no money in the bank!"

"Give me the book," said Hagen, and I obeyed. He sat down and wrote, and I wondered to see that his hand was steady. He wrote a check and passed it to me silently, falling to writing something else. The check read like this:

"*Thirteenth National Bank of New York:*

"Pay to the order of the Republican National Committee one hundred thousand dollars. HAGEN."

And the letter which he handed to me afterward was this:

"Prince Hagen requests the pleasure of an immediate interview with Mr. Weazel upon an affair of the utmost importance."

And this was sealed and addressed. "I think that will do the business," said Hagen, grimly, as he handed the envelope to the clerk.

The message was sent, and we stood waiting, my companion gazing calmly about the corridor. "That's so-and-so," he said, point-

ing out several notables to me; "you'll see them all sent for to consult with me in a few moments. And those are some reporters standing over there in the corner. Just watch them scurry by and by."

"But about that check?" I exclaimed.

"Oh, that's easy," said Hagen, smiling. "I shall arrive up at your place early to-morrow, and get up a few hundred pounds of gold from Nibelheim, and take it to a banker's, and have it telegraphed down here before your banks are open in the morning. And, if you want to know how I'm going to manage the rest of it, just see the papers to-morrow. I guess it's about time for me to go."

And sure enough, the messenger returned and whispered to the clerk, who opened his eyes. "Mr. Weazel will see you immediately," he said, bowing most deferentially. And Prince Hagen waved me a farewell, and was gone.

I was so interested at the outcome of these adventures that I could not yet make up my mind to leave the hotel; I seated myself in a corner and watched. Sure enough, it was not more than fifteen minutes before my friend's prediction was verified, and I saw a

messenger come down the corridor, and speak to each one of the prominent men whom I had heard named. Every man of them turned at once and went up to the committee's rooms. At the same time I began to notice groups of men standing about and whispering excitedly to each other, from which I judged that the news was leaking out; also I saw that the reporters were looking very eager, as they hovered about with their note-books in their hands. Perhaps half an hour later they were all summoned up-stairs.

I waited, amusing myself in the meantime with speculations, and knowing that I must see Prince Hagen again before very long. And sure enough, at about twenty minutes to twelve, I saw him come down, walking arm in arm with the great Weazel, followed by a swarm of the politicians and newspaper men, and stared at by the very considerable crowd that now filled the corridors. Under those circumstances, I did not expect to have anything to say to him, but, as he saw me as he passed swiftly to the door, he called, cheerily: "I'm on my way to the depot; come along."

I followed him in silence to the cab; there

was a swift farewell to his distinguished friends, who were most wonderfully obsequious; and then the vehicle rattled away, and Prince Hagen sank back with a chuckle.

"Did everything go well?" I ventured to ask, after a time.

"Splendidly," said he.

"And how did you manage it?"

"Oh, Lord," he said, "I can't tell that story again. Wait and read it to-morrow. This much I will tell you for your peace of soul — that before, I was a howling demagogue, and that now, I'm a representative citizen; and I tell you I like it a D. sight better."

"I understand," I said.

"Society is divided into two parties," continued Prince Hagen, "those who have and those who are trying to get; or, in the cant terms, the conservatives and the radicals. The one thing that worried me when I was a radical was how in the world I was ever to get out of it when I'd gotten what I wanted; and now I'm out of it as happily as Jonah, and, if I wasn't on Fifth Avenue, I tell you I'd sing!" And Prince Hagen laughed hilariously instead.

"Oh, but I'm in for it!" he said, showing signs of returning to his former ecstasy. "Only think of it, the world lies open to me! What is there that I may not do?"

"Your wealth is unlimited, I suppose?" I said.

"Mine isn't," he answered, grimly, "but the Nibelungs' is."

He paused for a moment, and then suddenly turned and gazed at me; an electric light shone in through the window, and I saw that his face was alive with laughter. "Tell me something, will you?" he chuckled, "*my idealist!*"

"What is it?" I asked.

"Do you think that the people will respect me *now?*"

"I don't know," I said. I could not keep from joining his smile.

"You'd better stay near me," said Hagen; "I think you'll learn a few things, and perhaps you may put them in a book, and become a capitalist yourself. As a matter of fact, before very long, I shall own this city and its citizens, body and soul, and I'll be the nearest thing to a god in existence. Come and see me some day; my home will be some-

where on this avenue until I find a place more suitable."

"Thank you," I said, gravely, "perhaps I shall."

And just then the carriage, which had been speeding swiftly, turned off the avenue to the depot. "Here we are!" said Hagen, gaily. "And now for Nibelheim! Good night, and don't forget the papers!"

And with that he sprang out of the carriage, and disappeared through the depot door.

I did not forget the papers. This was what I read in the official organ of the Republican machine, the New York *Moon:*

"TAMMANY TRAPPED!

A FOREIGN NOBLEMAN'S DARING EXPLOIT.

JOINED THE ORGANISATION!

And now reveals its plots and contributes a fortune to beat it.

"One of the most sensational incidents ever developed by a Presidential campaign electrified the members of the Republican com-

mittee at headquarters last night. About ten o'clock in the evening a man walked into the building, and asked if Mr. Weazel was in; upon being answered in the affirmative, he sent up to that gentleman an envelope, which, when opened, acted upon him, and upon the members of the committee then assembled, like a dynamite bomb. It contained a check for the munificent sum of one hundred thousand dollars, payable to the National Campaign Committee, together with the request that its signer, 'Prince Hagen,' be granted an interview with Mr. Weazel. The name of the gentleman was entirely unknown to any of the committee, but the request was, of course, at once granted. The result was an amazing and almost incredible romance.

"It appears that Prince Hagen, a foreign nobleman, whose native place could not be ascertained last night, has become enamoured of liberal institutions, and, having renounced his rights to a throne, has come to the United States with the intention of making them his permanent home. Being a man of high public spirit, he was determined to begin at once his career of usefulness, hoping thus to recommend his aims at once to his future fellow-

countrymen. The iniquitous régime under which this metropolis labours at present is of course notorious throughout the civilised world, and Prince Hagen had read much of its practices. Knowing how skilfully it has been accustomed to veil its corruption under pretences of virtue, this courageous nobleman conceived the daring and original idea of coming to this country incognito, and enlisting as a recruit in the ranks of Tammany, thus ascertaining for himself the real nature of the organisation. This plan he carried into success with amazing cleverness. He arrived in New York last July, by what steamer could not be learned; he was at once elected a member of Tammany, becoming a highly valued worker in the four hundred and seventh district of the four hundred and fourth ward, which is under the leadership of 'Mike' Leary. The adventures of Prince Hagen during this four months' period make one of the most thrilling stories imaginable. There was little time for much to be learned last night, and, in fact, it was decided to keep these matters a secret at present. But it may be stated, upon authority, that revelations of a most sensational character will surely fol-

low, for Prince Hagen's very voice showed the deep intensity of his nature and the determined resolution of his character, and he made plain that he had been deeply stirred to wrath by the iniquities he had witnessed. It is certain that many men high up in Tammany Hall are trembling in their boots, as they read this news to-day, for, so well did the nobleman conceal his real identity that he became a confidential agent of Leary, and was admitted to full knowledge of all the workings of the organisation. He has a full list of all the secret purposes to which the campaign money of Tammany has been applied, and is acquainted with all the methods of bribery and corruption which it has employed. It is probable that many arrests will follow from his revelations, and it is expected that their publication, which will be made in full before election-day, will profoundly influence public opinion. There is full evidence of a well-concocted plot, on the part of the Tammany heelers, to capture Leary's district by fraud, and also a hideous tale of blackmail levied upon gambling-houses and resorts of still more pernicious character, for the expenses of the campaign. The nobleman has

himself, incredible as it may appear, been the agent for the collecting of this tribute, and the paying of it to the proper persons.

"Less important, perhaps, but still more picturesque than these things, is Prince Hagen's account of his adventures during the months before election, when he was instructed by a cynical district leader in the arts of ingratiating himself into favour with the ignorant poor of the tenement-houses, by the distributing of free ice and coal. The prince, who was known by the name of 'Jimmie O'Hagen,' spent a large sum of money, which was really taken from his vast fortune, but which his fellow workers assumed he had privately collected by infamous methods, upon a great excursion, which was described at the time in this paper, and which attracted attention for the disreputable character of those who attended it, and for the scenes of riot which prevailed on board the steamer. Too much praise cannot, we think, be given to a gentleman of noble blood and refined tastes who thus placed himself among scenes of degradation for the sake of a lofty purpose. Another extremely interesting phase of Prince Hagen's experiences is the reputation which he ob-

tained as an orator; catching all the cant phrases with which the demagogues are at present beguiling the ignorant and dissatisfied elements of our population, he infused into them such vigour of manner as to produce most extraordinary effects upon his audiences.

"During the last few days accounts have several times appeared in this paper of the extravagant orations of 'Jimmie O'Hagen,' — orations which, in ridiculing, we had no idea were secretly meant by their brilliant author as burlesques. Last night Prince Hagen delivered at 'Spread-Eagle Hall' an address to an enthusiastic throng, denouncing the capitalists in such fierce terms as to drive his audience almost wild with rage, and himself with laughter. An account of this extraordinary speech was already in type at our office when tidings of the new developments arrived — the former article is appended below. This speech was the climax of the nobleman's Tammany experiences, and immediately afterward he drove to the Republican headquarters to tell his story.

"Prince Hagen is, in personal appearance, a man slightly below the medium size, with a small face, much wrinkled and expressive

of the keenest intelligence. Clad, as he was last night, in a perfectly fitting and tasteful dress suit, one could not but wonder how his fellow workers of Tammany failed to discern that he was a man of aristocratic breeding. Prince Hagen's voice is deep and earnest, and readily expresses his feelings. He evinced last night the profoundest aversion for the corruption with which he had become acquainted. He declared that his unprecedented contribution to the campaign fund was to be considered as an expression of this, and that he stood ready to follow it by other donations if, in the judgment of the committee, it was not too late to spend it advantageously to prevent the triumph of principles of public dishonesty in city and nation. The prince declared that, in his judgment, a victory of the Democratic nominee for President would be a public calamity beyond any words.

"The estates from which Prince Hagen has made this great donation are said to be of tremendous extent, and their owner himself stated that he could not tell their size. He did not state in what part of the world they are located, but he intimated that they contained extensive mines of gold, great quanti-

ties of which he has already had secretly conveyed to this country. After making his declaration, Prince Hagen left the city last night for a destination unascertained; he stated, however, that it was his intention to make New York his permanent home, and that he should at once begin the construction of a mansion which should outshine any of the homes of our millionaires. It is his intention to enter society, where his vast wealth and high rank, combined with the prestige of his present coup, should give him swift success."

Such was the narrative of Prince Hagen's doings. I had, after this, for some time no source of information about him except the newspapers, and so I cannot tell my story except by following their accounts. On the following day there was substantially no further news about him, except that no one knew where he was, and that efforts to learn the country from which he came had been unsuccessful, though there were guesses ranging from the South Sea Islands through Patagonia to Bohemia and the Cape of Good Hope; it appeared also that public curiosity was intensely excited, and there were pub-

lished long interviews with every one who had anything to do with the matter; likewise a thousand anecdotes about James O'Hagen's Tammany career were invented by ambitious journalists and contradicted by no one.

On the next day the news was spread that Prince Hagen had returned to the city in good health and spirits, and had made a further contribution to the campaign fund; and most important of all, it was stated that the promised revelations were to be made public at a grand mass-meeting of citizens at Madison Square Garden on the following night.

I suppose no one of my readers has forgotten that memorable evening. I was there early, and likewise ten or twelve thousand others; and when Prince Hagen appeared we gave him an ovation. It was a wonderful sight afterward to see that single man holding his audience silent and motionless with delight and wonder for three long hours.

He began, as he had promised, with his exposure of Tammany, and the angriest Democrat in that crowd must have shivered at the image which he unfolded — the more so since he spoke no word that was not from his own experience. He showed how a band

of robbers had gotten command of the machinery of a great party, and were using the prestige of its name to gain opportunities of plunder and corruption; he showed how, from the highest to the lowest, the vast organisation was held together by self-interest, how its members reaped the rich harvest of blackmail and of the patronage of a great city's government; he showed how vice was protected, and how corruption was shielded; he showed how, year by year, the poor and ignorant of the city were beguiled by sham charities, and how honest men were deceived by virtuous pretences; he showed how the ill-gotten wealth was partly spent in bribery to maintain the system, and how the unwisdom of opponents had contributed to continue the shameful wrong. All this he proved by facts and figures, and delivered with such glowing fervour of indignation, tempered, however, with serene self-command, that his audience thrilled and trembled, and when they did break forth, made the air shake with their applause.

And after these things he came to the campaign and its issues.

"But, fellow citizens — I trust I may use

that appellation" (applause and cries of assent) — "fellow citizens, then, I wonder if you realise what this thing means? Listen to me; we stand, you and I, the men of this republic, at the dawn of a new era in human history. Before it the selfish egotisms of men were held in bond by a despot, sword and bullet were the reasons for which men obeyed the law. But now we have hungered for a new glory, we have vowed that we will show new truth and new righteousness in the hearts of men; we have chosen to demonstrate to the watching nations that 'man is man and master of his fate,' that he needs no will to guide him but the law of his own conscience, that, in short, he can be free, and still be just. And oh, my friends, it is a wonderful thing; but it is a thing so infinitely perilous! Do you ever stop to think, you men who build this nation, what a vast mass of passion and greed you have pent up by the stern example of your will? The majority of men are never comfortable, through their own weakness and badness they must needs be ever struggling with poverty and sin; and they look at the unthinkable wealth that society has amassed, they look at it as a wild beast

stares at his prey, greedy and savage, waiting only a signal to spring. And what is it that restrains them? Is it any reasoning of their own? Do you suppose that the dweller in our tenements can perceive for himself the truth that brain must be lord of body, that great enterprise must needs be in the hands of men of mind, and that the so-called capitalist is the most hard-worked and the most precious member of our society? To speak of such a thing is to see its absurdity; the mass of the ignorant and discontented see only that they labour, and that another has the wealth; and if there is anything that restrains them from taking what they wish by force, it is nothing but the sentiment which we have built up, of respect for society and for the principles of public honesty and law. I tell you, as I look at this republic of ours, I see a sight that makes me tremble; now that the power rests solely with the people, there is no longer any need that the poor man be incited to violence, no longer need of stirring riot and pillage; there is a subtler method, there is a more fearful danger. For the man of our time has not only the power of his brains, he has the power of the ballot! He

may not be willing to steal, but now there is another way shown him by which he may possess himself of what is not justly his own! There is ever a class of men, creatures who prowl about the outskirts of society, seeking a chance to attack and devour; who are eager to point out this dreadful truth to the poor, — that there is no longer any government but *themselves,* that there is no longer any law except the law they make. And I tell you in all solemnity, my fellow citizens, that I believe that the future of Democracy hangs upon that pivot, I believe that the decision whether society can be entrusted to the care of the mass of its own members, depends upon the one fact, whether those among us who have mind and conscience can inspire the whole body with our sentiments, can maintain a respect for public justice and for private rights that will awe and restrain the restless element. And, my dear friends, it is for this reason, and no other reason, that I am here to-night to speak to you; it is for this reason, and for no other reason, that I give all the labour of my soul to the support of the Republican candidate; it is because, whenever I hear a word spoken about legislation

for the benefit of the poor at the expense of the rich, I tremble, not for my purse and for my possessions, but for the future of this land of ours and for the future of the human race!" (Tremendous enthusiasm.)

I have come now almost to the end of the political career of Prince Hagen; and I may finish the subject in a few words. Brilliant as this start of his was admitted by every one to be, I soon learned that it was elsewhere that his ambition guided him. There is no need to state here what was the outcome of the campaign, or to bear witness to the magnificence of the banquet which was tendered to Prince Hagen by grateful citizens; nor should it be necessary to do more than hint what was done with the evidence which he possessed against Tammany officials. It is a matter of common information how these gentlemen were severally indicted, and how after delays and delays repeated, public attention was gradually turned to other matters, and the whole affair was dropped. This same thing has happened so often that people who follow New York politics may not know to just which cases I refer, but that is a matter of no great consequence to our story.

CHAPTER IV.

I GO on to trace the adventures of my hero. I saw no more of him for a long period, but he was by that time a public character, and I was therefore quite as well informed. I have concluded that the best way I can follow the present part of his career is to give a few of the newspaper items just as I read them myself at intervals:

New York Hurled, November 19th.

"A rumour was bruited about social circles yesterday, which, although up to a late hour last night it had not been verified, created, nevertheless, not a little excitement. It concerned the foreign nobleman, said to be a millionaire, who recently created such a furor by his exposé of Tammany Hall. It has been understood that Prince Hagen, who has since then been staying at the Waldorf-Astoria, had in mind to make New York his permanent home, and to entertain extensively

throughout the winter; yesterday's report was that he had purchased the old Dyemandust mansion at Five Hundred and Fiftieth Street and Fifth Avenue, and was on the point of refitting it throughout for his residence. Mr. Dyemandust could not be found last night, and at his hotel it was stated that Prince Hagen, who is occupying a palatial suite there, was away from the city. It is believed that he is attending, in secret, to the investment of his vast fortune, which he is said to have brought entire to America. All efforts to ascertain the origin of this nobleman, or to ascertain his right to the title he bears, have so far proven entirely unsuccessful; although it is probable that, if he expects to enter society in this city, he will before long make these things known. A person prominent in social circles said last evening to a *Hurled* reporter," etc., etc.

New York Hurled, December 20th.

"The sensational rumour, which caused so much excitement about a month ago, that the old Dyemandust mansion had been purchased by Prince Hagen has at last been entirely verified. Both the parties concerned ad-

mitted yesterday, in an interview, that such a deal had taken place, although they were extremely reticent as to details. The price paid, which is said to have been simply fabulous, could not be definitely ascertained. Mr. Dyemandust was seen at his club by a *Hurled* reporter; it was gleaned from his scanty replies that the mansion had not been for sale, but that Prince Hagen had made an offer so munificent that the family had yielded.

"Prince Hagen was seen late last night at the Waldorf-Astoria, and condescended to grant an interview. He admitted that he had purchased the mansion, but when asked about the price stated merely that it was a trifle.

"'And about the report that the mansion is to be refitted?' he was asked.

"'It is true; everything will be taken out of it,' was the reply.

"'But the house was furnished in a most sumptuous fashion only a few years ago.'

"'I am aware of that,' he answered, mildly.

"'You intend, then, to make it your permanent home?' the reporter inquired.

"'Oh, by no means,' was Prince Hagen's reply. 'I intend the house for my occupancy

merely while I look about me to select some place that suits me.'

"'You intend to build, then, for yourself?'

"'I do.'

"'Upon a larger scale?'

"'Somewhat,' was the smiling reply, in a tone that betokened no great opinion of the Dyemandust palace. Prince Hagen was questioned further about this statement, but he said that he preferred not to talk any more about the matter at present. 'I am an unostentatious person by nature,' he said, 'and I do not care to talk about what I intend to do.'

"'Prince Hagen,' asked the reporter, 'the American people are naturally curious to know about a person of your prominence. Will you not tell them what country you are from?'

"Prince Hagen's eye twinkled, as he answered: 'Would it not be better to let the people find it out for themselves? It seems to amuse them so much. It cannot be very long before the secret comes out, you know.'

"'Many efforts have been made already,' suggested the reporter. 'All have failed.'

"'It is too bad,' said the prince.

"'It is your intention to enter society?'

"'Why,' was the smiling reply, 'that is not an easy question to answer. How can I tell if society will want me? I shall do what I can to make myself agreeable; I cannot say more than that.'

"'You will not make known who you are?'

"'Who I am? Why, I have done that. I am Prince Hagen.'

"'And the extent of your fortune? Is that a secret?'

"'No, not especially.'

"'Would you be so good as to tell it?'

"'I do not know it.'

"'It is very large?'

"'Some people might, perhaps, think so.'

"'Ten million dollars, perhaps?' suggested the reporter.

"'A little more than that,' was the reply, in a manner to suggest that it was very much more indeed.

"'A hundred million?'

"'That may be a trifle nearer,' replied the prince, gravely. 'You will be able to form more definite ideas, I think, when a little time has passed.'

"'Can you give any idea of how long it

will take you to refit the Dyemandust mansion?' he was next asked.

"'About two months,' was the response.

"'How is it possible to accomplish such a task in two months?' inquired the reporter.

"'Everything is possible,' said the prince, smiling, 'if one does not mind the incidentals. If I wished it done in two weeks, it could be managed. I am preparing now to issue invitations for an opening ball, to take place two months from date, and so, you see, there will be no possibility of delay.'

"Here Prince Hagen cut short the interview, explaining that he had an engagement. Concerning his plans, no more could be learned, for he keeps his affairs well hidden. Up to a late hour last night, all efforts to discover who were his agents in the transaction, or where his fortune is invested, have proved of no avail."

New York Evening Ghost, January 17th.

"From Newport comes a rumour, creating not a little excitement in society, that Prince Hagen has been secretly making vast purchases of real estate, and intends to remove several of Newport's landmarks to build a

palatial mansion, eclipsing anything there known. The rumour could not as yet be confirmed, but," etc., etc.

New York Whirled, February 1st.

"Society was electrified yesterday by the tidings that the old Dyemandust mansion, which was purchased a few weeks ago by Prince Hagen, was complete in its new decorations, and would be shown to a few friends and to the representatives of the press. This last favour was courteously granted by the prince because of the tremendous public interest which his purchase of the place, and the reports concerning his plans with it, have awakened. Prince Hagen announced, when the transaction took place, that he meant to refit entirely the palatial mansion for his own use, and that he would accomplish the task in the extraordinarily short time of six weeks, in time for a grand opening ball, about which rumours have meantime been busy. Since then, public curiosity has been upon the *qui vive,* and has daily been fed with new items of interest, etc., etc.

"It was reported that vast contracts had been made with various firms for the fitting

up of the home with a splendour hitherto unknown and undreamt of in New York; that all the available resources of the city, in the way of luxury and beauty, were being drawn upon; that an army of upholsterers and decorators were at work within the house; that the jewelry-stores and art collections of the city were to be ransacked and despoiled. Bit by bit, the public has learned the truth about these matters, and heard stories which were more incredible still. The Hagen mansion was surrounded all day by a curious crowd, and a platoon of police had to guard the door. At night, mysterious covered vans brought loads of mysterious covered articles, said to be treasures from Prince Hagen's kingdom. What served still more to inflame the curiosity of all was the fact that no one could guess where this mythical kingdom was, — that all efforts to learn even how the treasures had reached this country had been in vain. Throughout it all, Prince Hagen kept silence, smiling benignly upon curious inquirers, and going quickly on with his vast preparations.

"And yesterday, for the first time, the world was to see this fairy palace! It was

small wonder that society was wrought up to a fever heat, and the principal news in all of this morning's papers will be accounts of the Hagen home.

"It is to be said at the outset that the sight of this extraordinary mansion does not disappoint even the most excited anticipations; that, on the contrary, the actuality so far exceeds anything that any one can have conceived, that the sight of it leaves the beholder simply dumb with awe.

"The wonder of the house may be summed up in one word, — where it came from no man knows; perhaps none ever will know; so much of it one did not believe to exist in this world, and surely never expected to see in his lifetime; but it is *gold — gold — gold!* The walls gleamed with it, the floor shone with it, the furniture, vases, tapestry, stairways — *gold, gold, gold!*

"Wherever Prince Hagen's kingdom may be, it is certainly some place that has never been visited by civilised man; such unthinkable masses of gold exceed in reality the wildest dreams of the 'Arabian Nights.' An idea of the whole magnificent place could be given in a few words, for one has only to

imagine a huge building furnished from roof to cellar with the gleaming precious metal, and with every other circumstance arranged for the better display of its glow, — the deep, rich colours of velvets and silks, the blood-red and snowy white of priceless marbles, the thousand hues of the rarest flowers, and the dazzling gleam of countless masses of gems.

"The most extraordinary feature of the whole mansion, the one which meets the attention everywhere and strikes the beholder with wonder, is the seemingly limitless number of carved and beaten vessels of gold which the prince possesses; it seems certain these objects cannot have been bought in New York. Prince Hagen has such quantities of them that he seems scarcely to know what to do with them all. They line the walls and they cover the tables and mantels; one might weary of the sight were it not for the fact of their wonderful designs, and for the infinite skill and beauty of their workmanship, which makes of them a source of endless admiration and delight.

"The very first glimpse of the interior of the mansion strikes the beholder dumb; for once past the iron gates and the great folding

doors, a hallway strikes the eye beyond any description in its riotous splendour; here are marbles and gems and pictures which would take hours to describe; but above all and beyond all, the masses of gold—golden chairs and balustrades and mantels, and huge vessels of the solid metal. The whole ceiling of this room is a mass of electric lights, and the effect at night must be simply gorgeous. At the head of the broad stairways of the palace — one can call it nothing else — stands a huge vase of solid gold, fully ten feet high, and of weight and value quite inconceivable. Prince Hagen referred to this as 'the Coronation Cup,' an heirloom by a famous goldsmith of centuries ago. He vouchsafed, however, no further information, but stood by with a calm smile, while those present gazed in consternation at the priceless treasure.

"Afterward, Prince Hagen escorted the party, which consisted of about a score of guests, besides the *Whirled* reporter, through the entire building, revealing wonder after wonder with princely unconcern. The entire first floor is in preparation to be opened as a ballroom and parlours on the night of his grand entertainment; the apartments on the

second floor have been prepared to serve as reception and supper-rooms. Prince Hagen would give no information about the coming ball at present."

New York Chimes. "All the News that the People Want to Read." February 3d. Society Notes.

"Season under full headway. Until Ash Wednesday the round of dinners and dances will be incessant.

"Society is at the moment completely occupied with the grand costume-ball which is to take place at the palatial mansion of Prince Hagen on the night of February 10th. With the aid of his numerous friends, it is expected that it will be made one of those magnificent entertainments which occur but seldom in a lifetime. To organise a fête such as this is a difficult matter, but Prince Hagen anticipates no defeat. This is not to be a fancy-dress ball, as the host desires expressly that the costumes should be only such as were worn in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Water-sprites, gipsies, Cinderellas, Queens-of-the-night, and strolling minstrels will be out of order. The conventional dress

suit will not be welcome. The men must also wear court costumes of the period.

"Invitations for this splendid fête were issued yesterday; the best society will attend in a body, it is said. Many people wonder at Prince Hagen's audacity in beginning his attempt to scale the social ladder with so elaborate an affair; for if society failed to respond to his invitation, his position would indeed be desperate.

"But Prince Hagen probably has reasons of his own for feeling safe; he must have been sufficiently assured that his *entrée* would not be opposed. Perhaps, too, he counts upon the *éclat* which recent reports concerning his newly fitted palace have given him; truly, it is difficult to imagine society rejecting so magnificent an entertainment. From all accounts, Prince Hagen's mansion must be simply dazzling in its splendour; and it is whispered that the sums he is expending upon the coming fête are unthinkable.

"Costumes for the ball have doubtless been ordered in advance from Paris by most of our prominent society people. The time is shorter than is usually allowed for such elaborate entertainments. Nothing quite of this

sort has been done in the metropolis for a decade. It is safe to say that it will have a place in history.

"Few of the details have been announced as yet, but the apartments will be decorated with rare tapestries, and the lavish splendour of the host may be relied upon to present a gorgeous scene. Costumers and perruquiers will be on hand to arrange the costumes and wigs of the arriving guests. All the attendants will wear the livery of Louis Quinze. The mansion will be a very palace of olden time."

New York Hurled, February 11th.

"THE HAGEN MANSION.

HOW THE BALLROOM AND OTHER APARTMENTS APPEARED.

"The entrance was of the Château de Viau, although Louis le Grand was missing, and Americans of the twentieth century made up the courtiers. Gobelin covered the walls. Those spaces which the ancient tapestries did not warm with colour were alight with golden panels or with mirrors, and over their surface hung the rarest of orchids. Blossoms of

waxen bridal roses, mixed with the roses of la France, were tangled with great festoons of American Beauties. Thus the rooms disclosed themselves to the guests upon their first entrance. The wonderful golden vases stood on either side of the broad passage, and the guests proceeded between heavy curtains of gold and crimson satin to the hallway, which led to the dressing-room by a great winding staircase. Between the vases were clustered electric lights, the glow from them being partially dimmed by the varnished leaves of the Virginia creeper. Nodding American Beauty roses, entwined with clematis, set off the red velvet balustrade. In the centre of the salon Prince Hagen awaited his guests, the maskers passing between most elaborate decorations of flowers. The fragrance of the roses was nearly overpowering, added to the growing warmth of the room. From one of the landings of the stairway the guests had glimpses of the ballroom.

"A GORGEOUS DISPLAY OF GOLD.

"Everywhere the brilliance of gold dazzled the eye. The marvellous vases shone,

half-concealed by Antoinette wreaths of la France roses; also everywhere were great bunches of bridal roses, with a background of the dark-green Virginia creeper. Further points in the colour scheme were the white and gold of the mural decoration, and of the furniture of the Grand Monarque. From the salon opened an immense apartment — the ballroom, elegant in its proportions and wondrous in its decorations of gold. Priceless works of art in the precious metal lined the broad balcony which looks down upon the floor. The effect of the golden mirrors was made doubly potent by the screens of Virginia creeper, and of purple orchids, which seemed scarcely out of place in the tropical atmosphere. Great wreaths of la France roses decorated the mirrors, arranged underneath the clusters of electric lights. The centre of the floor was arranged for the *quadrille d'honneur,* its dividing lines being broad silk ribbons.

"OPENING OF THE BALL.

"After Prince Hagen had welcomed the guests, the *quadrille d'honneur* was danced, Prince Hagen being at the head, his partner

being Mrs. Miner-Gold. Prince Hagen's costume was almost too magnificent for description, being trimmed with precious stones of inconceivable splendour and size. It was a Louis Quatorze robe of state, of purple velvet, the corselet being entirely of gold, woven as chain-armour, and embroidered with a wreath made of enormous diamonds.

"Mrs. Miner-Gold wore the same costume she had made for the famous Dyemandust dress ball of 1863; it was a Marie Stuart robe of red velvet, the black brocade collar being covered with magnificent lace valued at $15,000 a square inch. Her jewels were diamonds, the stomacher, necklace, and head ornaments being entirely of these jewels.

"The ball was not formally opened until all the guests had been announced, and had paid their respects to the host; then Prince Hagen left his position and joined the participants of the three opening quadrilles, who awaited him. The quadrilles were danced as follows," etc., etc., for two pages of the paper.

New York Hurled, February 14th.

"Prince Hagen's costume ball is now a thing of the past. It will live in history as

one of the most magnificent entertainments which has ever been given in this metropolis.

"This result was obtained not merely by an enormous outlay of money; it was due more especially to a fastidious regard for every smallest detail, and to the exquisite taste of the host — things yet more essential to a really grand entertainment. A happy inspiration it proved — that of limiting the costumes to the most lavish period of history; to this was due the stateliness of the affair. Society has dreamed about and talked about nothing for weeks but this fête. Every expectation having now been realised and every hope gratified, the ball will for ever be treasured in the memory of New York's élite."

New York Whirled, February 17th.

"Evidently it is Prince Hagen's intention to capture metropolitan society by storm. Not content with last week's magnificent ball, which completely stunned society by its splendour, comes the announcement of a grand *bal masqué,* which is to be given very shortly, and which is to eclipse the former achievement in elaborateness and expense. Apparently society does not know just what to make

of this deluge of regal entertainments. If Prince Hagen continues to bombard the élite all winter in such fashion, he will end by drowning out all competition and in becoming official host to the city."

Town Slopics, February 19th.

"Hagen, Hagen, Hagen! There is no one in the world but Hagen! One hears so much about him that one would weary of it beyond utterance, were it not for the fact that Hagen is the most entertaining person in the world. One hears about Hagen all day at the clubs; they talk about Hagen instead of listening to the opera; they forget to eat their dinners for talking about Hagen. Here is one of the latest good things that everybody is telling.

"Prince Hagen recently strolled in about luncheon hour to one of the restaurants much frequented by the best society.

"After eating, he ordered a peach. Great consternation among the authorities! No peaches in the house; no peaches in the city! The head waiter tries to explain; Hagen looks at him in wonder, and merely says, 'I ordered a peach,' and goes on reading a paper, — reading about himself, by the way.

Thereafter *beaucoup de recherche,* and, at last, a peach. Then the bill comes; the cost of that peach is five dollars; and Hagen smiles.

"'Is there only one peach in New York?' he asks.

"'No,' replies the waiter, mildly. 'But there is only one Prince Hagen.'

"And thereafter he orders a peach every day."

New York Hurled, February 20th.

"An interesting vessel was sighted off the Hook at seven o'clock yesterday morning. A few weeks ago, there appeared in this paper an exclusive account of the purchase, by the brilliant society leader, Prince Hagen, of a pair of Arabian horses at a fabulous price; these steeds were said to have a pedigree of centuries, the entire line having been the property of the royal stables of the Shah of Persia. It was reported that Prince Hagen had bought them for an unimaginable sum, having in fact offered for them any price that might be asked. Immediately afterward, it was reported that he had purchased a yacht for the express purpose of bringing these wonderful creatures to New York. The vessel's

arrival was reported yesterday, and the announcement was made that the horses were well. Prince Hagen, when seen by a *Hurled* reporter, said as follows," etc., etc.

"A *Hurled* reporter secured exclusive permission to board the yacht, which is a large vessel, and inspect the pair of steeds. They are magnificent animals, chestnut in colour, and with manes of a wondrous silky gloss. It is Prince Hagen's intention to drive them himself, and his appearance will certainly create a sensation, public curiosity having been roused to an intense pitch by the news. With the horses came a native Persian keeper with several assistants. In an interview, the former gave the reporter the history of the steeds," etc., etc.

New York Chinaman, February 22d.

"SAVED FROM STARVATION!

A FAMILY, EVICTED IN SNOW, RESCUED BY BENEFACTOR. NAME OF RICH MAN A SECRET. HUSBAND DEAD, CHILDREN DYING. HELPLESS MRS. MURPHY SAVED AT LAST.

"From the crowded tenements of Mulberry Street comes a story so full of romance

that it reads like a fairy-tale, a story of a ghastly struggle against poverty, of accident, disease, and death; of cruel execution of heartless laws; of a family of five half-naked children and a bedridden mother turned out into the bitter January night; of the chance passing of a man of fortune; of pity and princely generosity; and then comfort and happiness for the wretched family.

"Mrs. John Murphy is the wife of a poor but honest labourer living at 927½ Mulberry Street; they have, or rather had, seven small children. Last fall Murphy was injured by a premature blast's exploding, from the effects of which he subsequently died. Then follows a pitiful story of a helpless struggle against penury, etc., etc. . . . Last week two of the children died from this disease, and Mrs. Murphy herself, etc. . . . They were then living in a wretched garret at the address mentioned. The children were almost without clothing, and had been without fire throughout all the dreadful severity, etc. . . .

"Then comes the most revolting incident of this story. The landlord of this wretched tenement called, insisting, etc., etc. . . . The wretched family turned out into the snow by

the relentless hand of the law, etc., etc. At this moment comes the angel of rescue, etc. . . . a carriage rolling past, the owner looked out, and descended, etc. The unfortunate family, almost hysterical with gratitude, etc., etc. Wrote a few words — astonished woman — check for a thousand dollars — benefactor vanished — thanksgiving, tears, etc., etc.

"Late in the evening the mother was found by a reporter for the *Chinaman,* surrounded by a host of eager friends, and receiving their congratulations upon her wonderful good fortune. Then came the most interesting development of all; for though Mrs. Murphy, in an interview, gave volubly all the particulars of the story told above, she refused steadfastly to tell the name of her benefactor, or even to describe him, giving as her reason that he had extracted from her a solemn promise to keep the matter a secret.

"No argument could shake Mrs. Murphy's determined resolution to respect this request, and it is probable, therefore, that the name of this noble-hearted man may never be known," etc., etc., etc.

New York Evening Journey, February 22d.

"Unexpected light has been thrown upon the dramatic incident reported in this morning's paper, of the gift, by some rich man, of a thousand dollars to a family of starving tenement-house unfortunates. The name of the unknown benefactor, who so nobly strove to keep himself unknown, has been discovered, and, as usual, it is the enterprise of the *Journey* which has obtained for the public this interesting bit of information. The *Journey* reporters bent all their faculties to the work of probing the mystery, and, after several hours' work, they have at last succeeded triumphantly; the news, of course, appears exclusively in this paper.

"The means employed were very simple. Mrs. John Murphy, who was the recipient of the handsome present, still refusing to make known the identity of her benefactor, and none of the witnesses of the incident being able to do so, a *Journey* reporter casually threw out a hint that the check might not be good, and then, after leaving, set to work to watch the house. It was only a few minutes

more before Mrs. Murphy came out in great haste.

"The reporter followed her, and, at the first store where she attempted to cash the check, he succeeded afterward in discovering what he sought. The announcement of the name of the rich man is quite certain to create a sensation in circles high and low. It is none other than the former Tammany investigator and present social phenomenon, Prince Hagen," etc., etc., etc.

New York Evening Journey, February 22d (6 O'Clock Edition.)

"Prince Hagen, in an interview with a *Journey* reporter, at his magnificent mansion on Fifth Avenue, said as follows:

"'It is true that I gave poor Mrs. Murphy a check last night, but the incident is not worthy of all the attention it appears to be exciting. I did no more than any one would have done under the circumstances. Naturally, being a man of means, I felt it my duty to do with it what good occasion affords me. I wish that the papers would stop talking about it. Of course, however, I duly appreciate the energy of the *Journey,* which I

always read, as I consider it by far the liveliest newspaper published in New York,'" etc., etc.

New York Moon, February 23d.

("If you see it in the moon, it's there.")

"He was compelled to submit to not a little slanderous abuse at the hands of those seditious persons who were trying to put the government of the country into the hands of the party of dissatisfaction and dishonesty, and who accused him freely of being himself a monopolist, and interested but in the preserving of his own money. Than such an incident as this nothing could be more welcome, showing, as it does, the real character of the man, and indicating what truth there is in the balderdash about the heartlessness of the money-eyed classes. Matters such as these are conveniently forgotten by the demagogic agitator. Doubtless nothing was further from Prince Hagen's intentions, but such an incident ought to go far toward bringing him the respect of the American people," etc., etc.

Town Slopics, March 5th.

"He cannot have meant it so, but certainly the rescuing of Mrs. John Murphy, 927½ Mulberry Street, was an inspiration.

"New York society has been talking about nothing else for a week, not without some laughter, but still with due appreciation of the picturesque and the sublime. There was a large clique of people who hated Prince Hagen heartily, accusing him of vulgar and plebeian ostentation; now he has become a hero, and the mouths of all detractors are stopped; and all because he gave Mrs. Murphy a thousand dollars — and gave it in a check! Since the days of Haroun al Raschid and of Eugene Sue, the world has pined for a prince to go about in disguise, and relieve misfortune with draughts on his bank account; and now, we in New York have one, and all our own! Certainly, we must take him to our hearts; and let no one for ever more dare ask if he be not an ex-pirate or an alchemist."

New York Evening Telephone, March 6th.

"Prince Hagen gave a dinner last night to a few select guests at his palatial mansion

on Fifth Avenue. The event was one of considerable importance, for it marks a new step in the meteoric career of this foreign nobleman; the guests invited were the very cream of New York society, and to have assembled them would have been a triumph for any one. The list of those present is as follows, etc.

"The Hagen mansion was decorated with its usual splendour; the halls and stairways were banked with countless masses of rare orchids, to obtain which Prince Hagen is said to have exhausted the supply of the Eastern States; at the close of the festivities, they were found plucked and strewn in an endless carpeting of colour beneath the feet of the departing guests.

"The huge carven vessels of gold, which have attracted such universal admiration, gleamed as usual beneath the dazzling illumination, etc., etc. The banquet-hall was musical with the play of countless fountains and the strains of soft music from a distant orchestra. The banquet was the most magnificent that society may ever witness, except the princely prodigal should himself elect to surpass it.

"The menu was as follows, etc., etc.

"After this dinner, which was concluded long after midnight, the guests were conducted to a concert-room, where a musical programme was superbly rendered. The decorations of this concert-room exceeded anything that pen can describe, etc., etc.

"The orchestra was a large one, but was composed of the best-known performers in this country, and under the command of the celebrated Herr Windenschlager. The soloists were none other than Madame Paganini and Signor Paddi, of the Blau Opera Company; the appearance of the former was cause for universal astonishment, she having never accepted a private engagement before. It was whispered that she had received the fabulous sum of fifty thousand dollars for this occasion. The programme was as follows, etc., etc.

"This varied and highly interesting programme was listened to with rapt attention by the assembled guests, and was rendered with rare excellence by all the performers. The orchestra, under Herr Windenschlager, covered itself with glory; the players had evidently rehearsed with extraordinary care, and it is not too much to say that this concert

will be remembered as one of the musical events of the season, an event as notable in music as was the entertainment in social life. The movement from the Beethoven Symphony was given a masterly interpretation; but beyond any doubt the *chef-d'œuvre* of the evening was the Strauss waltz, which was played with splendid spirit and vigour. The audience applauded enthusiastically, and Herr Windenschlager gave as an encore the wonderful Largo of Händel. In the selection from the Stabat Mater, Madame Paganini found the best opportunity for displaying her gorgeous voice. Signor Paddi showed all of the wonderful vocal skill which has made him so famous. As encore, he sang, with trembling pathos, 'A Prayer,' by Rienzi. Madame Paganini sang also Samuel Johnson's 'Drink to me solely with thine eyes,' and an aria from 'Der Freischütz,' 'Liza, Liza, Fromme Weise.'

"After the concert, a supper was served, the menu being as follows," etc., etc., etc.

It was not so very long after this last event that I chanced to be walking up Fifth Avenue, and to pass the mansion of Prince Hagen.

I am not a society person — never went to a ball or a dinner in my life — and I had reconciled myself to the thought of following the career of my friend from the distance. I was thinking of this when I chanced suddenly to notice his magnificent equipage, with the Persian horses and two unimaginably stately footmen. I assumed that he was going for a drive; and sure enough, just as I passed the gate, he came out. He saw me instantly, and called to me.

"My Idealist!" he exclaimed, catching me by the hand. "Why have I not seen you?"

"I feared you were too busy," I said, hesitatingly, "and too —"

"Oh, I understand," laughed Hagen; "but there never was a man with less of the pride of wealth than I. Come, take a drive with me. I was going into the park, and I'm all alone."

After a little hesitation I consented. I own that I was curious to hear more about him. We sprang into the carriage, which by this time had become the object of admiration of a small assemblage; it rattled off up the avenue, the horses making a magnificent

show, and Prince Hagen bowing to all the notabilities, and telling me their names.

"You would feel very much honoured," he said, laughing, "if you were not an Idealist. Do you know that, if the papers noted the fact that you were driving with me, you would become a literary celebrity in an hour?"

"Fortunately no one knows me," I said, "so pray keep the secret." And Prince Hagen laughed. I heard him still chuckling the word "Idealist" to himself occasionally, and seeming to derive from it a great deal of amusement.

"We must exchange ideas again on the great questions of life," he said, after a time, looking at me quizzically. "There is quite a deal of new data to consider."

"There is one thing I have noticed, at any rate," responded I, "the test of society that you once proposed to me you can no longer claim you are making. You said that every one should know what you thought; but now you make pretences. You must know that you do."

"Yes," he said, reflectively, "I know it. Did you ever know any one to make them better?"

"I don't believe I ever did," I said; "but why is it?"

"I do it," he answered, "because pretences are the one thing I have learned from society, — the one lesson in the art of life I found I had yet to learn."

"I am glad your visit profited you something," I said, gravely.

"It profited me that," said Hagen, "for I tell you, pretences are an invention so sublime that, when I think of what society does with them, I am simply dumb with awe."

"How do you mean?" I asked, with interest.

Prince Hagen was thoughtful for a moment. "You know," he said, "when I first met you, your talk about virtue was a thing absolutely incomprehensible to me; it seemed something quite apart from life, a fantastic creation of your own mind; but now that I have come to understand it, I have a deep respect for it, a deeper one than I can tell you. These pretences of mine you speak of are not hypocrisy at all; I believe in them; I have come to see that it is they alone which make possible the system in which we live."

"Explain yourself," I said.

"In the first place," said he, "I found this civilisation of yours simply appalling in its vastness. When I first saw the countless millions of your people, the unthinkable masses of wealth you had piled up, the cities you had built, it seemed to me almost a madness — it seemed to me a huge bubble that must burst; when I perceived that it was *real,* that its values were not mere fancies, but stakes for which a man might play, I tell you I was drunk with it. You will, therefore, understand my interest in finding out how it was done, and my respect for the means when I discovered them."

"And they are?" I said, inquiringly.

"The means," he answered, "are pretences."

He paused; I waited in silence until he chose to continue.

"For instance," he began, suddenly, "look at Nibelheim. They have down there what they call a society, but it is like a society of wild animals. No man dares expose his wealth, no man dares enjoy it; all his forces are spent in guarding it in terror. And every half-century some poor devil gets old and weak, and they fall upon him and divide the

spoil. They live like rabbits in a burrow; there is no splendour, no beauty, no education in their lives. And all that is because they have no morality, because brute force is the law of their being."

That sounded like a discourse of my own; I was perplexed. "And pray," I asked, "are you going to reform the Nibelungs?"

"One of the first of my plans that I hope to carry out," he answered, gravely, "is the introducing of Christianity into Nibelheim. I could never live there happily until the people were made moral."

I started.

"Life," said Prince Hagen, "is the survival of the strong. I care not if it be in a jungle, or in a city, it is a warfare of each against all; but in the former case the means is brute force, and in the latter it is power of mind. And do you not see that the ingenious device which brings this about, which makes possible cities and railroads and books and beauty, the force which makes the savage animal a docile slave of the man who can outwit him, is this Morality, — this absolutely sublimest invention, — this most daring con-

ception that ever flashed across the mind of man?"

"Oh!" I said, taking a long breath.

"Just think of it," went on Prince Hagen, "just see it, this society of yours! There are in this city, I suppose, one thousand rich men, and one million poor men, whose business it is to do what the rich command. And the rich men live in these palaces you see about you, and absolutely everything in the world they want they have; and for your poor you build great stacks of boxes, each big enough to hold his body, and admitting air enough to keep him alive. Because these wretches are hideous and filthy, you crowd them away from your sight into quarters where they swarm like vermin in a carcass, and there you let them feed upon what garbage they can pick up, until they die and rot in the ground. And the number of those creatures is a thousand to your one, and the best that is might be theirs if they would take it; but there is Morality! And the poorest of them would starve and die in his tracks before he would touch a bit of bread that was not his own, and he struts about and boasts of it, and calls it his 'virtue!' And so the rich

man may have what he will, in perfect peace and indifference! By heaven, if that be not a wondrous achievement, I, at least, have never seen one in my life."

I was silent in thought. "Then you believe," I asked, finally, "that this morality was invented by the rich for their own advantage?"

"I don't know how it came to exist," was the reply; "it seems too deeply rooted to be an invention; it seems to be a congenital disease."

"Some people," I said, gravely, "have believed that it was implanted in men by a God."

"Perhaps," said Hagen, "or perhaps by a devil. Men might have lived in holes like woodchucks, and been fat and happy, but now they have morality, and toil and die for some other man's delight."

"And you believe that the rich all think thus of the matter?" I asked.

"The rich never think at all," said Hagen. "What business have the rich with thinking? They simply take things as they are and enjoy them. What I do say is that such is the fundamental principle upon which all the world

acts. I say that you make a universal covenant, all but the criminals, of honesty, love, and unselfishness; that you then set to work to beat and hoodwink each other with the ferocity and remorselessness of the hyena; and that the covenant is then taken to mean that those who lose will not resort to violence. I say that if you look at society, any phase of it, *that* is what you will see; I say that the capitalist seeks to outwit the working man, the storekeeper to outwit his customer, the lawyer to outwit his client — that everything living outwits or is outwitted — that, in short, the very essence of the word 'business' is that; and yet so much is the importance of the other principle felt, so much is the use of morality understood, that you may seek where you will, among the vilest, and you will find all due pretence. I say, for instance, and I know what I am talking about in this case, that there is not in the jungles of Africa today a herd of wild beasts as essentially predatory, and as ruthless, as Tammany Hall; there is not a man who belongs to it who does not live by blackmail and corruption, or who has any thought in the world except to fasten his claws on what he can; and yet to hear it

talk, you would think it was a philanthropic society. The head of it is the most virtuous of all, and declares that no one can ever prove that he took a dishonest dollar — a great tribute to his management; he chose not to state the other truth, that *he* could not prove he ever took an honest one. And as I tell you, I have yet to find the part of this big earth where the same proceeding does not prevail."

"You have certainly perceived," I protested, "that Tammany is not considered respectable."

"Oh, respectability!" laughed the other. "Of course; its leader is simply a half-varnished thug; but that is not in the least because he is selfish, but because he is vulgar, because he has to make his money by fooling the masses, and by blackmailing the shady members of society. If you want respectability, there is Mr. Weazel, who is considerably more virtuous, — a gentleman and a member of a church. The business of one is done in the tenement-houses, while that of the other is with men of substance. I am not at liberty to say just now what I think of Mr.

Weazel, but he and I understand each other very well."

Prince Hagen paused a moment, and then added, reflectively: "That distinction I have just made is, I think, the essence of the word vulgarity; the difference between the Jew-trader and any of these society ladies who bow to me, is not in the least that there is less of money-getting or less of the sham I speak of. It is simply that one haggles for a few cents, and the other scatters largesses of banquets and balls."

And just then my companion raised his hat to an elegant personage who whirled by. "That was my friend Mrs. Miner-Gold," said he, "a lady of great consequence, as you know." And then he cracked his whip, and we rolled out into sight of the park.

"You know," he added, smiling, "that vulgarity is just why I left politics; some of it is inevitable in a republic. A kingdom is a far more pleasant arrangement, but for the fact that you may not happen to be king."

He laughed; I, meanwhile, was thinking deeply. Finally he went on: "You know, I should think you could see how absurd is all the fuss you make about this struggling,

when it is the very essence and soul of life. Is it not a plain law that most men have to work? And surely it is easy enough for anybody to see that there are ten times as many people in the world as the world can comfortably support. It is like a barrel full of rats — there is only a certain number that can keep on top, and the rest must sweat for it till they die. All that a man can do, that I see, is to take care that he comes out on top."

"And it does not ever trouble you about the rest?" I asked, with a shudder.

"No, of course not; why should it? It is just the spice of danger that gives zest to the combat. Does that seem so dreadful to you?"

"It does," I said, "it is not a pleasant description of being rich."

"Oh," said Hagen, "don't imagine that the rich folks think of it so. They simply find themselves on top, and they stay there and enjoy the view; they never see the rats underneath, so why should they fret about them? I happen to have seen it all, and so perhaps that makes you think me a little worse."

"Assuredly," I said. "It makes me think you a fiend."

He looked at me in amusement. "Well," he replied, "perhaps I am; but I manage to cut a pretty good figure, don't you think? I am an eminently respectable person." (He raised his hat.) "That was the great Mrs. Dyemandust who just went by," And my companion laughed again and then relapsed into silence. I watched him.

"You know," he said, finally, "I still wonder at your blindness. Put aside what I say, that is of no consequence; only see what I *do,* and tell me how my life is different from any of the people I meet. I have money, and I invest it cleverly and make an income; I spend that in getting pleasure and prestige. I murder no man, I break no laws, I stoop to no dishonesty; I simply ask no favours and show no mercy, — which is business. It happens, of course, that I have thought more than others and am not a dupe; that I am virtuous because I see the use of it, and not from blind tradition. I have seen that if you once do away with morality, if you once let all men know that selfishness is the law of life, the mob will rise, and then any one of your servants is your master. But why do you think I'd be any better if I were really a dupe of my

pretences — and still lived on like a fiend, and like every one else?"

I did not answer, and Prince Hagen continued, after a pause:

"As a matter of fact, you know," he said, "a man is at a disadvantage just in so far as he is a dupe of morality, just in so far as he is moved by prejudice and not by wisdom. It is the plain truth that the strongest will always rule, and that morality makes their rule enjoyable. It is only in a high civilisation that great wealth and luxury can exist; and a man who sees this plainly can drive at his goal as straight as an arrow, can be stopped by nothing, can be neither affected by passion nor blinded by delusion. Take me, for instance; I love nothing, and I hate nothing. I never lose my temper — you sat there and called me a fiend, and still you amuse me as much as ever; and that is the reason that I stand where I am, and the reason that I shall be master of this world of yours before I stop. To put it in a word, I can *think,* and I have seen the truth; to have done that is to be no longer a slave of men, but a god. Look at all the religions, for instance, and all the political parties; they serve

the purpose I have explained, they fool the *mob*. But what have they to do with *me?* It's just like the worthy Tammany gentleman we spoke of; he goes to England and owns thoroughbreds; and the poor devils who stay at home, — he lets each one of them wear a badge, and call himself a *regular Democrat,* and hurrah all night for the victory! That is the kind of thing you call morality and devotion."

There was one time when I was happy listening to Prince Hagen, and that was when he got after Tammany. But he did not continue the subject. For awhile we threaded our way in silence through the crowded carriages, stared at by every one, and bowed to by all the notabilities. Then at last my companion began speaking once more.

"I have observed," he declared, "one way in which a man can see pretty clearly what are the real motives of humanity; that is by watching a nation. I don't know just why it is, but virtue seems not yet to have spread that far; nations have no morality, and hence no shams, and we can therefore learn the whole truth from them. And while we are using illustrations, a perfect type of a nation

is its representative, a war-ship; did you ever really think about a war-ship? A war-ship is a thing which no one can possibly misunderstand; it is a thing that is built to say, 'Do as I command, or be hurled out of existence.' There is a people that you hate, or that will not give you three feet of territory that you demand; and straightway you get out your war-ships, and you pound, and you rend, and you tear, and you smash, — cities and buildings, human flesh and human souls, men, women, and children, — just as much as ever you need to accomplish your purpose; nor does it make the slightest difference how trivial the purpose may be. I could show you where millions were killed for a harlot's whim. To mention a thought of mercy, or even of justice, in connection with nations, big or little, is to raise a laugh anywhere. Europe to-day is one huge cage full of wild animals that glare at each other and snarl. And the sentiment of the nation is, of course, the sentiment of the men who compose it, and a perfect *résumé* of civilisation stripped naked."

"There is a sentiment," I suggested, — weakly, I own, — "called patriotism —"

Prince Hagen laughed. "'My country right or wrong!'" he said. "And what is a man's country but a macrocosm of himself? What is France but a magnified Frenchman; what is its 'glory' but a sublimation of his own diseased conceit? Patriotism! Has each one of your nations a separate God?"

I answered nothing; Prince Hagen laughed again.

"I don't blame you," he said. "Pretences, pretences! You do not like to see this self of yours naked; everything must be veiled, and made beautiful and pleasant. I think quite the most wonderful thing about this society of yours, next to its existing at all, is the way in which the ugliness doesn't show. Every man of you gratifies his lust whenever he pleases; but your women are all serene, and your books are all decorous. You converse of the holiness of love and the divineness of the sex, and, if one did not know of the foul sties where you pen your human flesh, he might really think that you were men of sternness and truth. And see the wives of your rich men! Down in Nibelheim, when we wish things done, we drive the people to it with our whips; but your society woman, if

she lashes any one, even with her tongue, she does it in her boudoir. But is any master in Nibelheim better served than she? She has a thousand at her beck and call, to prepare her gowns, and her banquets, and her mansions, and she never stirs a finger! All this, you know, is what I find the wonder of your civilisation. Before it there was an age of militarism, when the master was the robber-baron who trained himself in brute strength, and killed those who did not obey him. But now we have industrialism; this blessed morality has done away with force, and we barons train our brains, and command men by the power of our wealth, — which means to say that, instead of killing them, we starve them to obedience. And only see how wonderfully it works! For I find myself lord as never was an Alexander; I can hand down my empire to my children, something which no Alexander could do. And I have no music and no body-guard, but I tell you, sir, what I want done is done, and done quickly, and there is no man who dares defy my will."

He paused. "It is not quite as bad as that," I ventured, mildly.

"Oh, I know what you mean!" laughed he.

"You say that a man is free to work where he will. But that is only your bad economics; if I command the labour of society, I command the labour of every man *in* society. Of course, I don't deny that a body can go off in the wilderness, like you, and live off birds' eggs and fish; but what I do say is, that if you want to live in society, it is *I* you must pay for the privilege; for the food is mine, and the clothing is mine, and, if you want it, you must serve *me*. A man calls himself an artist, and prattles about his sublime ideals; but if he paints a picture, it is *I* who buy it, and I put it in one of my hall bedrooms. He calls himself a musician, and labours for art; but he comes to my house and plays when I bid him. He writes his books, and he wears out his soul in making them beautiful; but if he doesn't make them to suit the rich people, where is he?"

Prince Hagen paused again; he had gotten down to personal matters. "Where is he?" he repeated, vehemently; and I answered, "About where I am now."

Then I added: "At least, however, I can be sure no rich person will ever get much pleasure from *my* writings!"

"Don't boast," smiled the other; "we like to see sometimes how jealous people are."

There was a silence, in which I inwardly resolved to attempt no more retorts; then my companion went on. "Don't suppose," said he, "that I'm denying that any individual may get free; you might, for instance, if you weren't so obstreperous, write a clever book, and become a capitalist yourself. But what I do say is that the vast mass of men obey their masters; I say that the very lawmakers obey them, if they want money to be elected again. If they do *not* obey, we have only to bribe the voters to choose others; for nothing in the world is easier than to bribe any man to cheat society, and therefore himself. You see this new power of which I am speaking has your civilisation riveted in chains of steel; there is only one way you can overthrow it, and that is to overthrow society; the reason being that the foundation-stone of the social system is this beautiful morality, this right of every man to keep all that he can get."

Prince Hagen must have felt that I shuddered at those last words of his; he laughed. "There is not the slightest need of thinking it dreadful," he remarked, "for what I am

laying down is really the fundamental principle of life, — that the weak are the natural prey of the strong; there is no power on God's earth that can prevent that. Once it was the law of the galleys, and now it is the law of the sweat-shop, that the victims are given just food and shelter enough to keep them alive, in exchange for the labour of every instant they can stand and see." And then he paused for a moment, and gazed at me smiling.

"There is one way of escape," he went on, finally, "one way of overcoming these strong men and preventing their rule; that is by having one stronger yet. First there were the barons, and then there was a king; and, if you watch, I can promise you that you shall see history repeat itself. I am going to set out, you know, to be a capitalist of the capitalists."

I looked at him with interest. "You are going in for finances?" I asked.

He laughed. "What did you expect?" he inquired. "Do you suppose that I am going to content myself with this society imbecility? Do you imagine I have no higher aims in the world than being stared at by wax dolls?"

"You are just amusing yourself, then?" I demanded.

"Partly," said Prince Hagen, laughing, "and partly I want to look around me and get myself established. I don't want to be regarded as a public nuisance, you know, when I do get to work; I must be a respected member of society. I shall have to endow a few colleges, so that the newspapers won't call me names. And besides that, of course, there is the real reason — that I am getting my funds together, cashing in my chips, so to speak. I have to be very careful about that."

"How do you mean?" I inquired.

"If you have ever thought about it," replied my companion, "you know that wealth stands for services rendered. All these capitalists that we are talking about have done something for society, or pretended to, and have been paid for it; or, if they did not, some one else did it for them. Mr. Snob, let us say, plays at being a gentleman, and considers that his own country isn't good enough for him to inhabit; but his grandfather carried a peddler's pack, you know, and made the

money. Do you understand what I am driving at?"

"I am not sure," I replied, "that I do."

"Well," said the other, "ask yourself what *I* have done. It simply happens, by chance, you see, that I have a store of what society, in its ignorance, has made its standard of value; and of course, therefore, I have to move very quietly while I'm getting rid of it. It is likely there is a great deal more gold in Nibelheim than there is on the whole earth's surface to-day; and, if that was once known, why the price of gold would simply go down like lead."

"Sure enough," I said, not without wonder; then afterward I added: "But tell me, hasn't it ever occurred to you that I might tell on you?"

"You?" laughed Prince Hagen, beaming on me. "Bless my soul, no."

"But why not?"

"Who would pay any attention to you, you goose? The story is obviously impossible, in the first place; and then, who are *you?* I have not been in the world as long as I have without observing how much attention it pays to its authors."

I answered nothing; after awhile my companion added, with a genial laugh, "No, I'm not afraid of telling my plans to you. I'd even advise you to invest in railroad stock, my good friend, only I know you have no money."

"You intend to go in for railroads?" I asked, not heeding his jest.

"I intend to go in for everything," answered Hagen. "Why should I care what it is? Perhaps it would be difficult for me to make you realise my plans, because your imagination is timid; but I can merely tell you that, when I once start in at business, I mean simply to buy everything that's for sale. There is but one thing that keeps a man from being master of this society of yours, and doing just what he pleases with it; and that is competition. When I set out, it will be with the simple intention of putting an end to competition. You look puzzled, as I tell you that; and no doubt it seems to you a wild fancy. But what can be the meaning of all this specialising and incorporating, except that the world needs not many masters, but one master? All that is wanted, you know, is money; any man who had the brains and

the nerve, and whose financial power was unlimited, might do to-day just what I mean to do — make a close corporation of this planet — might make himself lord and master of the whole system of society, and charge for his services just exactly whatever he chose. I think of that, you know, when I meet all these strutting turkeys who come to my parties. It is only that that makes it possible to bear them, — that I know I can twist their necks whenever I wish, and let them know to whom the barn-yard belongs."

Prince Hagen cracked his whip, and his eyes flashed. I watched him for some time in silence. "But you are sure you can do it?" I asked at last. "You have made no mistake in your plans?"

"Mistake?" asked he. "Shall I not be beating them at their own game? Do not these people glory in their commercial era? Is it not they themselves who have declared that wealth shall be the power in the world? How is it that they make men serve *them,* except just as I have told you, by the power of starvation? They allow men just enough to keep them alive and able to work; and why should not I do the same thing in my turn?

I am perfectly safe, you know; they cannot break the rules of the game; if they take my wealth from me by force, they pull the corner-stone out of the system they have built, and crush themselves as well as me. Is not that all clear as day?"

"But," I objected, "it is not true that you have *all* the wealth."

Prince Hagen laughed grimly. "I have so nearly all," he replied, "that the rest is not worth mentioning. I have thousands of those little Nibelung creatures digging away, and willing to dig for ever; and there is down in Nibelheim already the gold that they have stored up in the Lord only knows how many thousands of years."

"But it is not all yours, Prince Hagen," I put in. He laughed. "I'll attend to that by and bye," he said, and his eyes shone.

He touched the wonderful horses with his whip, and the carriage swept out of the park and began threading the labyrinth of vehicles on Fifth Avenue. "We are almost home now," he said. "There is no time for me to tell you all my plans. But you are not an imaginative person. You would not believe

me, anyway. You must wait and see how things happen."

I did not say anything; I watched my companion's mouth twitching, as he guided the horses. "Just think," he exclaimed, breaking at last into laughter, "only a few months ago I was a schoolboy, and you were trying to make an Idealist out of me! And telling me that I could rise in the world only by my virtue! Wasn't it funny?"

Again I did not reply; he went on grimly: "I am rising not altogether badly, on the whole. By the way, there'll be some news in this afternoon's papers that I fancy may interest you. Have you seen it?"

"No," I said. "What is it?"

"Read it and see," he replied, smiling. "It's a long story, and there's no time now."

We were then just approaching the "palatial mansion;" as the horses drew up, attendants came out, and a crowd began gathering in an instant. Prince Hagen sprang from the wagon without appearing to notice the excitement.

"You must come in and see me some day," he said, pleasantly. "Perhaps you might like to see some of my playthings."

"I will come," I replied, as he turned to ascend the great stone steps. And then as he vanished, I hurried down the street, stared at by the crowd. From the first newsboy I met I bought a paper, and on the front page I read this:

"PRINCE HAGEN ENGAGED!

ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS BETROTHAL TO MISS GOLDEN KIDD.

TREMENDOUS EXCITEMENT IN SOCIETY!

"An announcement was made this morning, which completely electrified social circles in New York, that Prince Hagen, the now world-famous millionaire and society leader, was engaged to marry Miss Golden Kidd, daughter of the late Captain Kidd. This announcement was made by the Kidd family, but no details could be obtained from either of the parties concerned, except that the statement was positive and authentic. The news came as an entire surprise to every one in society. It is considered the most im-

portant of the social season, capping as it does the climax of the meteoric career of the dazzling Prince Hagen," etc., etc., etc.

And I thought that it capped the climax, too.

CHAPTER V.

THE reader must be so good as to imagine that a couple of months have passed since the announcement which closed the last chapter. I give two more newspaper articles concerning Prince Hagen. The first of them was under the heading of "Finance;" it was a very long and weighty article, filled with many technical terms which I did not understand. The gist of it was as follows:

Panicky and unsettled conditions prevailed generally to-day; the mysterious rumours of a bull movement, which have been agitating Wall Street for a week, gained in force. The steady rise in prices of all kinds continued throughout the morning, and toward afternoon increased to a startling extent. Specific quotations are tabulated below; on an average, quotations showed a gain of five points at the hour of closing last night, and general alarm and anxiety prevailed. Startling developments must be awaited to-day.

The cause of the movement was the con-

tinuous buying of half a dozen firms, who seemed to be provided with inexhaustible resources, and who forced prices steadily up in spite of the most strenuous efforts of a strong bear party, whose offers were accepted in all cases without a moment's hesitation. These circumstances lent strength to the strange rumour which has been terrifying Wall Street for several days, that Prince Hagen was about to begin operations with his tremendous resources; evidence for this, except the continuous purchasing of the broker firms, there was none, but the rumour gained currency more and more.

What would be the effect of the entrance into Wall Street of Prince Hagen's untold wealth, at this hour it is not easy to tell; but one can easily understand the alarm which the report excited, etc., etc.

So much for one, and now the other:

"ALL THINGS READY FOR THE WEDDING.

MISS KIDD WILL BECOME PRINCESS HAGEN IN A VERITABLE FAIRYLAND.

HARD TO GET ROSES ENOUGH.

"The Kidd residence was entirely given up last night to the transforming genius of the florist, and long after the family had retired, the half-hundred men employed for the purpose were busy putting the finishing touches to the magnificent decorations which will help render memorable the wedding of the daughter of the house. Through all the wealth of floral display, the rose will predominate, and, indeed, be queen. The country has been ransacked from Boston to California for roses, and still there were not enough last night.

"It is estimated that fully fifty thousand flowers will be used in beautifying the house, including American Beauty roses, lilies of the valley, Japan lilies, orchids, and bridesmaids. In addition there will be employed seventy thousand strings of smilax, sixty-eight thousand yards of asparagus vines, and ropes of asparagus vine will fall from the ceiling of the square rotunda in the centre of the mansion to the first floor, so as to form a canopy.

"The family spent a quiet and comparatively uneventful Sunday. In the morning the bridesmaids and some of the ushers who called were allowed to view the magnifi-

cent wedding presents, which were displayed in the library. The presents will also be on exhibition after the ceremony.

"WONDERFUL DECORATIONS.

"The ceremony will take place at two o'clock, directly in front of the long pier-glass in the music-room, which is the south-eastern corner of the mansion. The glass will be concealed by a screen of imperial purple tapestry, embroidered with a very quaint pattern in silver. This tapestry will be carried up to a few inches below the ceiling, and fall in a canopy over the raised dais upon which Archbishop Sullivan will stand in performing the ceremony.

"Along the sides of the tapestry will run ropes of smilax and lilies of the valley, which will form a covered walk, or aisle, extending from the foot of the dais to the staircase. The aisle will be marked out through the music-room by strands of purple satin ribbon, supported at intervals by the stalks of flowering plants.

"THE BRIDAL PARTY.

"The bridal procession will be headed by the ushers, who, as they reach the dais, will arrange themselves on one side. The bridesmaids will take up a position immediately in front of the ushers, and then Miss Kidd will advance to the dais, where her brother will place her hand in that of the prince, and then step to the rear. The members of the family will follow. The wedding breakfast will be served after the ceremony, in the music and dining rooms, at small tables.

"As Miss Kidd is pronouncing the words which will make her the Princess Hagen, nearly twenty thousand poor children will sit down to a feast which is to be provided by the prince," etc., etc.

At last the wedding-day came. That day I was walking up Fifth Avenue, without any particular purpose, and I chanced to walk by the great Hagen home; everybody stared at it as they passed, as if trying to see beyond the heavy curtains in the windows. All New York was talking about the marriage of the afternoon.

It was then early in the morning, and I chanced, as I went by, to recollect Prince Hagen's invitation to call; an irresistible impulse seized me to go in and have a look at his world-famed treasures, and to congratulate him upon his good fortune. I tried to argue myself out of the desire with the statement that it was too late; but I knew that Prince Hagen was not the one to have his equanimity ruffled, even a few hours before his marriage.

"He may not be so glad to see me," I mused, "as now when he's a bachelor. I am going."

And so I turned, not without a certain amount of pride at being the only one of that wondering crowd who dared ascend those imposing steps. The servant who opened the door for me stared a trifle, and made me wonder, uncomfortably, if my costume were possibly not up to the standard; but he took my card, and I sat down to wait.

I have already quoted a description of the entrance-hallway of the Hagen mansion; my business at present is with the owner himself. In a few minutes the servant returned and escorted me to a wondrous reception-room,

glowing with jewelled gold, where I perceived its owner, clad simply in black, reclining in a golden chair. He rose with a smile to greet me. "I was wondering if you ever meant to come," he said.

"I am a little afraid of all this splendour," I answered, smiling in turn, and taking the seat offered me; "and then I feared that since your engagement you might be busy."

"Oh, no," he said, "I am always glad to see my Idealist. And how is the world treating you?"

"It seems to be treating *you* very well," I said, dodging the question; "I suppose this is a very happy day with you?"

"I suppose so," said Prince Hagen, mildly.

"And how do you like being in love?" I asked.

He gave a slight start. "Who in the devil suggested *that* to you?" he inquired.

"But you are going to be married to-day," I said.

"Ah, yes," he answered, twiddling his fingers, "that I know."

He sat for a moment watching me, and smiling. "You are *not* in love?" I asked, finally.

"Let us not talk nonsense," said he.

"But tell me why you are marrying," I demanded. "You surely do not need money."

"Oh, no," he said, "but it's the proper thing to do, and I want to establish myself. It gives me a little more prestige, you know, and also it draws attention from my financial coup. The latter is on now, by the way, as I suppose you've seen. Then, too, it gives me business connections, so that I can proceed without attracting attention; and it's a pleasant adventure, and it doesn't cost me any trouble. There are many reasons, you see."

I sat for awhile watching him in silence, he smiling; I think part of the reason he liked to talk to me was that I was the biggest fool he knew, and it amused him.

"Prince Hagen," I asked, finally, "have you told your fiancée who you are?"

"Told her?" inquired he, in surprise. "I have told her I am Prince Hagen."

"But does she know that you are a Nibelung?" I insisted.

"No," he said, "of course not."

"Do you know," I said, in a low tone, "I have wondered if it was not my duty to tell her."

He was taking a jewelled cigar-case from his pocket. "Why don't you?" he asked, without stopping.

"You think that I could not make her believe me?" I inquired.

"I don't know," said he; "but what difference would that make?"

"You mean that she would marry you none the less?"

"Have a cigar?" said Prince Hagen; and then as I declined, he slowly lighted his. "My dear fellow," he said at last, between the puffs; "you might prove to her that I was the devil, with hoofs and horns, and with brimstone and sulphur inside of me, and still she'd marry me. I might be a French nobleman, the very bones in my body rotten with centuries of inherited lust, — a cad, and a puppy, and a duellist beside, — and still she'd marry me! Do you not know that the family has tested all these vases?"

He paused for a moment, and drank a long draught of amusement while he watched me; then at last he continued: "You seem not to show a proper appreciation of what a supereminently desirable bridegroom I am. It is not merely that I am the most lavish enter-

tainer and the most talked of man in New York; it is not that I am, presumably, the richest man in the world; but I am a prince as well! And I tell you there's no one in all this world to cringe to a foreign nobleman like your genuine free-born American."

Prince Hagen waited, but I did not reply. "I think," he continued, "it is because they are so vulgar they can't help knowing it. These would-be aristocrats — they are all of them fresh from killing hogs, and such things; and they all try to be proud, and can't be anything but uncomfortable. They all look down on each other, and everybody looks down on them; and so when a man of real aristocracy comes from Europe, *that* is what they are all pining for, and they lick his boots, even while he kicks them; and a woman will marry him, even if she has to buy him a suit of clothes to make him decent enough for the ceremony, and though he keeps mistresses with her money before and afterward. I learned *that* much about your American society in a very few days."

I had no reply to make, and we sat for a moment in silence, he puffing at his cigar; then he said: "Here are some of the accounts

of the great event; would you like to see them?"

"I've already read to-day's papers," I informed him.

"Ah, yes," he replied. "But I mean to-morrow's."

"To-morrow's!" I echoed, in wonder.

"Yes," he said, "they all send me the proofs to read over, of course. You will see where they have left the blanks for me to fill in."

And as I gave a gasp, he handed out to me a batch of long strips of paper, — the accounts of half a dozen of the most prominent journals. I glanced over one of them — the *Hurled* — while Prince Hagen watched me and laughed.

"PRINCE HAGEN MARRIED.

WEDDED TO MISS GOLDEN KIDD YESTERDAY.

ARCHBISHOP SULLIVAN TIED THE KNOT.

UNITED IN A PARADISE OF FLOWERS. WEDDING PRESENTS OF ASTOUNDING VALUE; DIAMONDS AND OTHER PRECIOUS STONES.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIFTH AVENUE HOME, OF THE BRIDE'S TROUSSEAU, AND THE BRIDESMAIDS' GOWNS.

"In the music-room of the bride's palatial residence, Archbishop Sullivan presiding, Miss Golden Kidd, daughter of the late Captain Kidd, was married at two o'clock yesterday afternoon, to Prince Raffaeli Alexandrovitch Boniment de Hagen. Immediately after the ceremony the bride and groom left the Kidd residence, taking the half-past four o'clock train for the South Sea Islands. The prince was accompanied by his valets and attendants, and the princess by her maids.

"No words could be adequate to describe the scene of wonder which was presented by the gorgeous mansion. Lavish decorations of flowers made the place a scene of enchantment, while from hidden instruments music heralded the bridal procession to the guests, and a voice, famous upon two continents, sang the song of welcome. Madame Paganini, of the Italian opera, was concealed by bowers of roses and rare orchids, and festoons of smilax made dazzling by myriads of electric lamps; from this point of vantage she

sang the dream song from 'Lohengrin' to a hushed and awestricken assemblage, etc., etc.

"Ere the song had closed, the guests had placed themselves in the apartment where the ceremony was to take place. As the orchestra burst forth in the strains of the Lohengrin wedding-march, the bridal party came into sight down the flower-strewn aisle. Archbishop Sullivan, attended by Fathers O'Donnelly and Rafferty, and Fathers Murphy and McGinnis, advanced to the raised dais, with its canopy of velvet and gold.

"THE BRIDAL PARTY.

"Then came the bridal party; Prince Hagen attended by —— and ——, who had been waiting in the reception-room, came through the suddenly opened doors and took their places behind the clergymen. Likewise the ushers, advancing through the room, led the way up the garlanded aisle to where the archbishop and his assistants stood in solemn state. The procession which followed was led by —— and ——. After them came the bridesmaids —— and ——, dressed in black astrachan trimmed with cheesecloth, and

wearing Gainsborough hats of mousseline de soie, shirred with Nile-green peacock feathers, and each carrying a gigantic bouquet of pink and white geraniums. The bride came next, leaning upon the arm of ——. Her great train, which was fully nineteen feet long, was carried by ——, ——, ——, and ——.

"The bride looked her best, but it was evident that she was nervous. The ushers took the stand upon either side of the archbishop, separating into couples. The bridesmaids did likewise, and, handing her bouquet of black-eyed Susans to her sister, the bride advanced and stood at last at her future husband's side. At the same critical instant Madame Paganini, accompanied by trombone and bassoon, began tremblingly to sing 'Oh, Promise Me.' The archbishop, with his mitre raised aloft, stood solemnly facing the guests, Fathers O'Donnelly and Murphy being on his left hand with the service books, and Fathers Rafferty and McGinnis being on the right. As soon as the notes of the wonderful music had subsided, the archbishop began the service. —— stepped forward and handed to Prince Hagen the Nibelung ring,

which he, bending low, placed upon the trembling finger of the blushing bride.

"A NOBLE BENEDICTION.

"In his address, before pronouncing the benediction, the archbishop spoke as follows, stooping and seeming to speak only for the wedded pair. He warned them that in this world everything is arranged by an overruling and all-powerful Providence; this should be an hour of deepest humility and awe to them. With the possession of high position, of wealth, and of social prestige, went also most grave and solemn responsibility. Turning to Prince Hagen, the archbishop pointed out to him that what he had had an opportunity to see of American customs and ways should be an experience of deep effect upon all his after life. The Almighty would assuredly not rest content with less than the full measure of beneficent effort on his part, in return for the wealth and opportunities with which he had been favoured. The responses of Prince Hagen were uttered in a clear, distinct tone. The bride's voice shook, but she

spoke with touching dignity, which was noted by the hearers," etc., etc., etc.

I stopped there; I did not care to peruse the three or four columns of this kind of thing that followed. Neither did I care to pursue further with my companion the subject of his marriage; for several minutes we sat in silence, he gazing in front of him meditatively. At last, when the silence was growing awkward, I brought up another subject.

"I notice things in the papers about your financial advance," I said; "the battle is apparently on."

"It is," said he, smiling suddenly. "I began a week ago, the same day that I got the last of my treasures up from Nibelheim."

"Gracious heavens!" I gasped, staring at him. "You mean that you have emptied that huge cave of gold?"

"I do," said he, calmly.

"And how much did it come to?"

Prince Hagen slowly closed one eye, but said nothing.

"And is it all invested yet?" I asked.

"Not the thousandth part of it," was his reply. "I am putting in a few millions each

day," he added afterward. "There is no hurry, you know."

"You are creating tremendous excitement," I said; "the papers seem to be full of the Wall Street rumours."

"It is nothing as yet," he said; "wait awhile. Prices will be double what they are now in a few days."

"And then you'll stop and let them settle, I suppose?" I remarked.

"No," said he, "why should I?"

"Do you not care to buy as cheaply as you can?"

"Yes, of course," was the answer; "if the market gets panicky, I shall stop and wait for the air to clear. But I cannot help permanently raising prices at each move; I am constantly unloading masses of gold on the world, and its value must therefore fall. My best plan, it seems to me, is to sell quickly, before the world catches on to the trick, so to speak — before the balance has time to adjust itself."

I gave up the argument, for I am not a political economist; my companion smiled benignly. "I may have to quit from time to time," he went on; "the first chance I get I

am going to take a trip. I was going to hunt you up and see if you wouldn't like to go with me."

"Where to?" I asked, in some wonder.

"I'm going back to Nibelheim," he replied.

He saw that I was interested. "I will tell you all about it," he said. "I believe I told you once before that I intended to civilise the place."

"You said something about it," I responded, "but pray explain."

Prince Hagen sat for a moment, smoking meditatively, his eyes fixed upon me. "Tell me," he asked at last, "suppose you were to be given an opportunity to reform Nibelheim, to teach those blind, wretched creatures to love beauty and virtue; would you like to do it?"

"It would depend," I said, "upon what was your reason for inviting me."

"My *reason?*" said the other. "What has *that* to do with it? Virtue is virtue, is it not? no matter what I think of it."

"Yes, very certainly," I said.

"And virtue is its own reward?" he queried, gravely.

"Perhaps so," I replied.

"I think myself that is why it is so scarce," said Prince Hagen. Afterward he went on in a more serious tone.

"Listen to me now," he said; "I am in dead earnest. I should not make any conditions with you, and you would not have anything to fear from me. You believe in all your idealisms, even though they smash the ship; so why not go ahead and teach them in Nibelheim? You surely must consider it a shame that those helpless creatures live there in the bowels of the earth, and know nothing better to do than to dig gold all their lives. Is is possible that you would refuse to teach them to look to things higher? Would you not like, for instance, to begin at the beginning — to clean out their homes, to teach them to love fresh air, and to build beautiful houses? Would you not like to send their children to school, and have them taught to read? Would you not like to make them learn to love music and poetry, to introduce the study of literature there? Would you not like to have your own books published and read by the Nibelungs? Can it be that your heart would not be stirred by the possibility

of inspiring a whole new race with your lofty aspirations — with being actually able to govern them, and teach them, and make them whatever you chose?"

The argument was very subtle; but I did not reply.

"Let us put the whole thing in a nutshell," said the other, suddenly. "Understand, in the first place, that I am quite serious, and that, if you do not go, I shall only have to offer the chance to some one else. Down there is a whole race of creatures who dwell like animals in a burrow; they lived a thousand years ago just as they are living now, and they will live almost certainly in the same way a thousand years to come. Their lives are absolutely without meaning or use; they care nothing about beauty; they think nothing about growth; no one of them has any thought but of his own wretched, deluded self. And yet these people have minds, they might be made to see; they have souls, they might be taught to worship; they have not only their physical strength, which might be of use, but they have vast stores of wealth which might become a power for good. You have seen all these things yourself, and you

know that I speak the truth; and when I tell you that I mean to devote myself to the civilising and developing of these people, and that I ask for your help, can you refuse to give it? Supposing that I once convinced you that my determination was real, that the civilisation I wanted was real civilisation, that as teacher of the moralities I would recognise your authority entirely, and give you a free hand to do just what you saw fit, would you not feel that to come with me was your solemn duty?"

"You have perhaps your own reasons for wanting this civilising done?" I suggested.

"I am not doing any shamming," replied Prince Hagen; "obviously I have my own reasons; but what has that to do with it? You and I hold different views as to the nature and use of virtue; but we are certainly of entirely one mind in our agreement as to its importance. And you seem to me to hold your view with perfect knowledge of the facts of the world about you; you see that the consequences of your trying to be unselfish are that you get left on all the good things of life; and still you swear by unselfishness. You cry aloud to all men that they must do right

though the heavens fall. Do you mean that? Or is your preaching all a sham? are you really in your heart afraid to follow your doctrine? Let us grant for the sake of argument that the consequence of educating and elevating the Nibelungs, of teaching them to love beauty and virtue, would be that they were deprived of all the stores of wealth they have, and were forced to labour at getting more for a wicked capitalist like me, would it not still be true, according to your view of life, that it would be better the change should take place?"

"Yes," I said, "it undoubtedly would."

"Ah," said Prince Hagen, quickly, "then you will come and uplift them?"

"No," I answered, "I very certainly shall not."

"And why not?" he demanded.

"I have very weighty reasons," I responded, gravely, "for doubting the perfectibility of the Nibelungs."

The other looked at me; I chose to appear very deep, and so I did not smile. There was a long silence, so long that Prince Hagen's cigar went out; and then finally he observed,

earnestly: "That is the one clever thing I have ever heard you say in my life."

Again there was a pause; I did not choose to risk my reputation by a second venture. But after my host had relighted his cigar and recovered his ease, I said:

"Count me out of your scheme, Prince Hagen, for I have too many other plans. But tell me something about it; what do you mean to do?"

"I've been thinking it over," he answered, "and I think the best way that I can manage what I want is to take a few priests down to Nibelheim, and introduce the Catholic religion. Catholicism goes best with monarchy, you know; if you only let the priests have the souls, you may do whatever you like with the bodies."

"Pray, how do you know so much about it?" I asked, smiling slightly.

"I?" echoed the other. "Did you not know I am a Catholic?"

"For Heaven's sake, no!" I exclaimed; "I was wondering about your wedding arrangements. Since when is this?"

"Since I joined Tammany Hall," was the answer. "I never do things half-way. And

I had a good father explain the system to me. He said that I would get immortality if I believed in it; I think that I should have deserved it."

Prince Hagen paused for a moment and puffed in silence; then suddenly he remarked: "Do you know that it is a very wonderful idea, — that immortality? Did you ever think about it?"

"Yes," I said, "a little."

"I tell you, the man who got that up was a world-genius," observed the other. "When I saw how it worked, it was something almost too much for me to believe, and still I find myself wondering if it can last. For you know if you can once get a man believing in immortality, there is no more left for you to desire; you can take everything in the world he owns — you can skin him alive if it pleases you — and he will bear it all with perfect good humour. I tell you what, I lie awake at nights and dream about the chances of getting the Nibelungs to believe in immortality; I don't think I can manage it, but it is a stake worth playing for. I say the phrases over to myself — you know them all — 'It is better to give than to receive' — 'Lay not up for

yourselves treasures on earth'—'Take no heed, saying what shall ye eat!' As a matter of fact, I fancy the Nibelungs will prove pretty tough at reforming, but it is worth any amount of labour. Suppose I could ever get them to the self-renouncing point! Just fancy the self-renunciation of a man with a seventy-mile tunnel full of gold!"

Prince Hagen's eyes danced; his face was a study. I watched him wonderingly. "Why do you go to all that bother?" I demanded, suddenly. "If you want the gold, why don't you simply kill the Nibelungs and take it?"

"I have thought of that," he replied; "I might easily manage it all with a single revolver. But why should I kill the geese that lay me golden eggs? I want not only the gold they have, but the gold that they will dig through the centuries that are to come, for I know that the resources of Nibelheim, if they could only be properly developed, would be simply infinite. So I have made up my mind to civilise the people and develop their souls."

"Explain to me just how you expect to get their gold," I said.

"I expect to get it just as I get it in New York," was the response. "At present they

hide their wealth in holes; I mean to broaden their minds, and establish a system of credit. I mean to teach them ideals of usefulness and service, to establish the arts and sciences, to introduce machinery and all the modern improvements that tend to increase the centralisation of power; I shall be master — just as I am here — because I am the strongest, and because I am not a dupe."

"I see," I said; "but all this will take a long time."

"Yes," said he, "I know; it is the whole course of history to be lived over again. But there will be no mistakes and no groping in this case, for I know the way, and I am king. It will be a sort of benevolent despotism — the ideal form of government, as I believe."

"And you are sure there is no chance of your plans failing?"

"Failing!" he laughed. "You should have seen how they have worked so far."

"You have begun applying them?"

"I have been down to Nibelheim twice since the death of dear grandpa," said the prince. "The first time, as you imagine, there was tremendous excitement, for all Nibelheim knew what a bad person I had been,

and stood in deadly terror of my return. They had a few hopes, of course, for Alberich had spread the news of my journey to the world to be reformed; but I fancy most of them thought they were doomed. I got them all together and told them the truth — that I had become wise and virtuous, that I meant to respect every man's property, and that I meant to consecrate my whole endeavour to the developing of the resources of my native land. And then you should have witnessed the scene! They went half wild with rejoicing; they fell down on their knees and thanked me with tears in their eyes; I played the *Pater Patriæ* in a fashion to take away your breath. And afterward I went on to explain to them that I had discovered very many wonderful things up on the earth; that I was going to make a law forbidding any of them to go there, because it was so dangerous, but that I myself was going to brave all the perils for their sakes. I said that there were many wonderful things known to the earthmen which I meant to teach them; first of all, I told them about a wonderful animal that was called a steam-drill, and that ate fire, and dug out gold with swiftness beyond any-

thing they could imagine. I said that I was going to empty all my royal treasure caves, and take my fortune and some of theirs to the earth to buy a few thousand of those wonderful creatures; and I promised them that I would give them to the Nibelungs to use, and they might have twice as much gold as they would have dug with their hands, provided they would give me the balance. Of course they agreed to it with shouts of delight, and the contracts were signed then and there. They helped me get out all my gold, and I took them down the steam-drills, and showed them how to manage them; so before very long I expect to have quite a snug little income."

Prince Hagen paused and knocked the ashes from his cigar. "What do you think about that?" he asked.

"I wish you joy," I said.

"You still don't think you'd like to come help?" he inquired, mildly.

"No," I said, "I don't think so."

"You might be high priest to all Nibelheim," said Hagen; "it would be a paying position."

"No; I'm sorry, but I have other things to do."

"It all comes to the same thing in the end," he observed. "I had as soon you stayed here to strengthen your own people in their moral ideas. There is a time of trouble coming, you know, when I get my hands on things. I promise you the world will be managed differently from the way it is just now. When there is no more competition, men will have to work for what they can get; and then there will be no more extravagant and empty display on the part of the rich, I can assure you. If I do not turn their Fifth Avenue mansions into lodging-houses, it will be because my plans miscarry."

"You will leave just one for yourself?" I inquired.

"Oh, no," he said, easily, "I have decided to build my mansion in Central Park."

"Perhaps," I suggested, "you have not always remembered that you live in a republic."

"I live in a country," was the answer, "where the power that rules is money; where the man who has money may have whatever else he will."

"I have some doubts of it," replied I; "you may find public opinion troublesome; you may be hampered by the law."

"I will bribe the voters," was the response.

"But if the opposition becomes too strong?"

"Then I will buy the legislators," answered Hagen, and laughed.

"That is all very well," I exclaimed, impatiently; "but if you intend to subject all civilisation to your will, and to make all men your slaves, you will waken in the end a power of rage that nothing can withstand. You will suddenly find laws passed to deprive you of your wealth all at once."

"Ah, yes," laughed my companion, "in that case I will call for assistance upon you."

"Upon *me!*" I gasped.

"Upon you, of course, and upon all other moralists — upon all who believe in public honesty, and in the sanctity of property; upon all who respect the deep fact of morality, that it is better to suffer any evil than to soil one's conscience; upon all decent people; in short, upon all who have learned God's command, 'Thou shalt not steal!'"

I said nothing; Prince Hagen smoked.

"Understand me," he continued, after a time; "I am no fool, I have seen all the consequences of my actions. I know just what must be when my work is completed, when all wealth, all power, all command is in the hands of one selfish man, and all the rest of men are his slaves, compelled to toil night and day for his pleasure, and receive a bare existence in return. I know that they must watch me in my splendour with hungry eyes; and I know that they can be held back from it all by nothing in the world but one thing — their conscience! And if I dare set to work to bring about such a state of affairs, it is only because I have come to believe that morality has been so strong a habit with men that they will stand the strain. I see the same thing about me now, you know, everywhere in the world. Am I not living in a palace now? And down on Hester Street are there not ten thousand people crowded into a smaller space? And yet do they ever dream that it must not be just so? Wait until the time comes, and watch how I make the fight! If it does not prove a thrilling spectacle, it will not be my fault, I promise. You must, of course, not expect me to speak as a cynic,

as I do now; I shall be virtuous and indignant; I shall say that the interests of the working classes must be trusted to those to whom God, in his infinite wisdom, has given control of the property interests of the country. I shall have right and justice on my side; I shall stand sublime upon my pinnacle of virtue, crying that the first man who lays hands upon my power is a thief, and that the government which sanctions him stands self-perjured before the judgment throne of heaven. I shall call all the sanctity of religion to my aid, and all the dreadful majesty of justice. And do you think that I shall not find honest men to stand by principle — that no prophet will arise to thunder against those who appeal to violence and fraud? Who knows but you might be that prophet yourself? You would recognise the fact, would you not, that the employing of violence against me, or the robbing of me with the aid of ballots, would mean a denial of the moral law, and the proclamation of a reign of anarchy and crime?"

I did not attempt any response to this eloquent appeal; I was striving to conceal some little agitation.

"You do think that my case is hopeless?" asked Prince Hagen, with feigned anxiety.

"Not entirely," I said.

"And if I fail," he continued, "if I bring down this flimsy Phantasm Structure of a civilisation about my ears — if I reduce society once more to a Rousseau 'state-of-nature,' what difference will that make? Shall I not be Prince Hagen? And Nibelheim will perhaps be more preferable as a dwelling-place by that time, anyway; what do you think?"

It was hard for me to realise, somehow, that all these things were actual possibilities — nay, that they were even then beginning to be. I was staring at him, and he smiling, as he watched the look of perplexity on my face. He was reclining in his chair, his arms outstretched wide; his whole presence at that moment seemed to me to be so much that of a demon that I shuddered.

"At any rate," he said, his eyes gleaming, "there is one thing very certain, that wherever I am, here or in Nibelheim, I shall always be a prince; whatever there is to rule I shall rule, and rule it alone. I am getting to feel my wings in these days, and to know

my power; and, if any man thinks he can match it, let him only come and try!"

And he laughed; he had gotten up suddenly from his chair, and was standing before me; then, as he continued to gaze at my face of anxiety and wonder, he put his arms on his hips, and bent over and began to shake with laughter.

"Idealist!" he chuckled. "Ha, ha, ha! Idealist! Tell me, have you nothing at all to say about it?"

I had nothing at all.

"And you will write your sublimities still — with never a doubt?" he inquired. "And be just as altruistic and enthusiastic and generally seraphic? I ought not, as a matter of fact, to tell you all these things, for they shake your faith; and you have the makings of a moralist in you, I think; you might influence many people to love meekness and unselfishness. I must cherish and encourage every influence of that sort I can find, you know."

There was a long pause after that; I sat with my eyes fixed upon the Nibelung, and he with his mocking laugh returned the gaze. I had never attempted to answer his argu-

ments before, but just then, as I sat there, a striking thought came to my mind.

"Prince Hagen," I said, suddenly, "would you like me to tell you one of those instances of virtue such as you are seeking?"

"Yes," he answered, "by all means. Go ahead."

"It happened many hundred years ago," I said, "but its influence is none the less potent for that, and you might find it useful in case of need. It was one of those men whom you call moralists, one who believed with all his soul that this morality came from God, and that it was more precious than many kingdoms. He gave all his life to teaching it, to practising love and meekness; and in the end he allowed himself to be crucified, that he might attest his faith in his message."

"Such instances are very curious," observed Prince Hagen, as I paused. "I have heard of them."

"This man founded a great religion," I said; "you have heard of him, too."

"Ah, yes," was the reply, "but why do you tell me about him now?"

"I was going to tell you one of the sayings that tradition puts into his mouth," I an-

swered. "It is a little story, a very curious one, and one that I am certain you would find useful in your attempts to impress upon other men the fact of the vanity of riches."

"Ah," said Prince Hagen, "that is good; let us hear it."

I sat for a few moments gazing at him; then I said:

"'The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

"'And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

"'And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

"'And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

"'But God said unto him, Thou fool, *this night thy soul shall be required of thee:* then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?'"

And I stopped; Prince Hagen stood still, staring at me.

"Is it not an interesting story?" I asked, gravely.

"Yes," he answered, "very." And then he stretched his arms, and forced a laugh. "It makes me thankful that I am a Nibelung," he said, "and have thousands of years to live."

"Are you very certain that you have so many?" I inquired.

"Fairly," he responded, laughing.

"Have you never thought that perhaps, while you are crushing all civilisation with gold, some fanatic might take the law into his own hands? Have you never thought that even now some unexpected sickness, some accident —"

"Oh, come, come!" exclaimed he, impatiently, "you are talking nonsense!"

And I stopped; he seemed a little angry. A moment later he took out his jewelled watch and glanced at it; I took the hint.

"It must be getting late," I said, rising; "it must be near the hour of your wedding."

"Yes," he replied, "it is."

"Forgive me for taking your time," I put in.

"Oh, that's all right," he said, condescendingly; "I could spare it."

"And forgive me for disturbing your peace of mind; I regret—"

Prince Hagen waved his hand. "It is nothing," he said; and then, laughing with his usual carelessness, he escorted me to the door of the apartment and opened it.

A tall attendant stood there, and took me under his charge. "Good morning," said the host, as I started; and then he added to the servant, "The carriage in ten minutes."

Afterward I heard him close the door, and I followed the man down the broad hallway. I had much to think of, but I could not forbear to gaze about me at the wondrous place, at the magnificent tapestries and paintings, the floors of rare and wondrous marbles, the long rows of jewelled vases of gold, gleaming in the sunlight. So I passed down the great staircase, and to the hall below, which shone like a vision from the Arabian Nights; I paused for a moment to gaze at the marvellous Coronation Cup, with its groups of sea-nymphs and Tritons supporting a jewelled crown; and then I passed on to the grated door, and so out into the street. I heard the barriers clang behind me, and I took a deep breath of the fresh air.

The way was blocked tight with a staring crowd, but I forced myself through and went on down the avenue. I felt pretty much as a man in a dream; for I had not yet realised the fearful things that Hagen had told me; it seemed a nightmare, a phantasy of my own brain. I whispered to myself again and again: "Can it be true that this man will master all society — that he will turn all the vast machinery of human progress to his demon's use?" I thought of what he had already done, and I shuddered; the form of him loomed up before me, like some giant spectre overshadowing my soul.

"It is a ghastly thing!" I whispered. "What can one do against this power of evil? Must the world always be at the mercy of the wild beast of selfishness? must high and sacred things be always the prey of brute force and cunning?"

In general, I do not torture myself with images of evil; but just then they were forced upon me, and my being writhed at this sight of black injustice enthroned and defiant. "What can be done?" I exclaimed to myself. "What can be done? This man is master of everything, or will be; and who can over-

throw him? I, and others, who are labouring for art and beauty, have scarce bread enough to put in our mouths; and the wealth of men, the labour of millions, that might be of sacred use, must go for the glory of this wretch! He stands there upon the pinnacle of his power, and mocks at all opposition; is there nothing left for faith to do but cry out in despair and rage? Of what use is it that a man strives for the high gifts of the soul, when all the world is filled with the wonder of such things as these — when Hagen and Hagen's power and Hagen's glory are the talk of all, the ideal of all?"

And so I went on, not heeding where I walked, or what passed about me; my soul was swallowed up in bitterness and hate, a mood that I suppose all true men must sometimes know. I saw nothing to do but live apart like a Timon, and let the world worship its own idols, and be of the devil quite altogether as it chose. I thought of the press — I thought of the politicians — I thought of the *"élite"* and their inanities — and it seemed as if God's fair earth had all at once become a carnival of apes.

"Let him master them," I muttered, "and

let them serve him, just as he says they shall. What difference will it make? He is a devil; but is he any worse than the people who gape at him and toady to him? He happens to be the victor of the moment in this miserable jangle of vanities. He stands now at the summit of his triumph, knowing that he is secure, and mocking at man and at God —"

And then suddenly I came out of my reverie with a start; I was still on the busy avenue, amid the noise of eager crowds and hurrying vehicles; but my attention had been suddenly caught by a loud shout that rang above them all. I stared for a moment, taken at a loss; and then, as the cries grew more frequent, I saw that people were pointing up the street in the direction from which I had come. I turned, and then gazed, transfixed with sudden alarm.

Some four or five blocks up the avenue there was a commotion apparent among the crowded vehicles; they were scattering to right and left in confusion, amid cries of warning from the throng of people. A moment later I saw a carriage come through the space thus opened, drawn by two horses that were galloping like the wind. It was

evident in a second that they were running away; and pandemonium reigned. Coachmen turned their teams into side streets, shouting as they lashed their horses; others drove upon the sidewalks, while the crowd scattered in every direction, men leaping over railings, and women and children seeking refuge upon the steps of dwellings.

There was a horse in the middle of the street that had taken alarm and become unmanageable; I rushed with several others to seize the bridle and force it to one side, the cries in the meantime becoming more and more a bedlam. A policeman flashed by me on a bicycle, riding at full speed and sending a warning shout ahead. And in the meantime the team of runaways came nearer and nearer, until I could hear the rattle of their hoofs upon the pavement.

Somehow or other the crowd got the refractory horse to one side; I gave a swift glance down the broad avenue, and saw that it was clear for a block or two more, and then I turned to look again at the approaching horses.

They made a thrilling picture; they were

only about two blocks away at that moment, and racing like mad; behind them there was a driving cart swaying from side to side. I saw one figure in it, and I whispered in terror, "God help him!" And then suddenly I bent down, leaning forward and staring, my eyes starting from my head. I caught at a lamp-post, and then all at once gave a shout that rang out above all the noise and excitement. I had noticed the horses, that they were chestnut in colour; and then as they came a little nearer I had recognised them — recognised it all — the red driving-cart, and the black figure, and the madly galloping team. They were the Persian horses! It was Prince Hagen!

Men had heard my shout, and they stared more wildly than ever. And meantime the horses were plunging frantically on, galloping, galloping, galloping, their hoofs beating sharp thunder on the pavement. They were wild horses anyway, lithe, trembling thoroughbreds; and now they were stretched out in fierce race, necks extended, nostrils quivering, eyes red and staring in terror. The reins were loose, flapping madly about their

legs, causing new and new exertion. It was like standing by a track and watching an express-train sweep up with ever-increasing speed and rattle. The carriage swayed and rocked, and the people screamed in fear; for there upon the seat — alone and helpless, and wholly paralysed with terror — sat a man, a small, black-clad figure crouching upon the seat, clutching the rail with convulsive grip, and staring ahead with dilated eyes, — Prince Hagen!

My cry had been passed on, and the street rang with it: "Prince Hagen! Prince Hagen!" And meanwhile nearer and nearer! So long as I live I shall never forget that face — the face of that lord of millions and master of men, whirling onward in mad race, bent forward and with set teeth, his hair flying backward, and his face as white as paper. And so he shot by like a flash of light, the horses panting and the vehicle rocking in delirious nightmare dance. And an instant later came a shrill scream from it, and a shout from a thousand throats. A man had leaped out to stop the horses, and, quick as lightning, they had swerved in alarm. The crowd scat-

tered on the pavement, and an instant later, with a fierce, sickening crash, the carriage hurled itself against a lamp-post. I saw the figure on the seat shoot forward like an arrow through the air, and I heard the thud, as it crashed head-first against the stone corner of a flight of steps.

Most of the people stood still, sick with horror; but one or two bounded forward. They seized the bridles of the plunging horses, and I — I darted wildly to where Prince Hagen lay. I saw blood flowing as I bent down. The man rolled over — there was a great gash in his forehead, but he was still alive. He half raised himself, his hands quivering; there was a look of frightful struggle on his face, fierce pain and terror battling in the grip of death. His lips moved once; he clutched wildly in the air; and then he gave a gasp and fell back. A gurgling sound came from his throat, and a great gush of blood from the open wound. One quiver shook his frame, — and then not a motion more. I gazed once, and then turned away my head.

Prince Hagen was dead!

New York Evening Whirled.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

"HAGEN KILLED!!

PERSIAN HORSES RAN AWAY! JUST BEFORE WEDDING! FIFTH AVENUE CROWDS HORRIFIED BY ACCIDENT!

"This afternoon, at ten minutes past twelve o'clock, just two hours before he was to have been married, Prince Hagen was driving down Fifth Avenue, when his famous team of horses took fright at an automobile, bolted down the avenue, and finally, at the corner of Fortieth Street, collided with a passing ice-wagon, throwing the prince from his seat, and killing him instantly. The accident, which was one of the most thrilling ever seen in New York, was witnessed by crowds of people, who thronged the avenue.

"The day was to have been the most eventful in Prince Hagen's life. All preparations for the great wedding had been made, and all day the happy bridegroom had been receiving the congratulations of his friends. Just before the catastrophe, he had been closeted with a well-known society leader, and, after his friend took leave, he ordered his horses, for what purpose could not be learned. His leaving the house was witnessed by a crowd of people, who had been gathered about the building all day.

"It was noticed that the Persian horses were fiercely restive;

New York Evening Journey.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

"PRINCE HAGEN DEAD!!

DREADFUL ACCIDENT ON FIFTH AVENUE! PERSIAN HORSES BOLTED! TRAGIC END OF A WEDDING-DAY!

"This morning, at fifteen minutes to twelve o'clock, almost at the very hour of his greatest joy, the career of Prince Hagen was cut short by the running away of his Persian horses. They broke into a run without any apparent excuse, crashed into the curb at the corner of Forty-first Street, overturned the carriage, and instantly killed the prince. Fortunately, the avenue was not crowded at the time, or yet more ruin must have been caused by the maddened steeds.

"All preparations for the wedding, the news of which has electrified the whole country, had been completed, and Prince Hagen was the envy of all on this long-expected day. Not five minutes before the accident, he had been talking to a *Journey* reporter, to whom he expressed his joy at the coming event. He then ordered his team and passed out, being cheered by the crowds which have surrounded his mansion at all hours recently.

"The magnificent horses gave no sign of any wildness, and no one had the slightest warning of the fearful calamity impending Prince Hagen paused for a moment to stroke the heads of the beautiful creatures, of which he

it was all the groom could do to hold them. Prince Hagen, however, showed no sign of fear, but took the reins at once and drove away, cheered by the crowd. The team had gone about ten blocks down the avenue, when an automobile whirled out from a side street, causing the horses to shy in fright. At the same time, the reins in some way became entangled, and a moment later the horses broke into a run. The groom at once leaped to the ground, escaping with a fractured collar-bone. Prince Hagen, however, pluckily held to the reins, endeavouring with all his power to stop the maddened team.

"At no time during the wild ride that followed did he lose his head, but guided the maddened creatures on their long run down the avenue. The race was watched by terrified crowds; the horses ran like the wind, the driving-cart swaying from side to side. All efforts to stop them proved of no avail, and likewise Prince Hagen's own brave fight was in vain. At Fortieth Street, an ice-wagon passed directly across the avenue, and the team crashed straight into it. Prince Hagen was thrown, falling into the middle of the street, and fracturing the skull on the left side. A *Whirled* reporter was the first person to reach him; he raised himself half-way, gasping 'My wife!' and then, with a groan, he sunk back dead.

"The city is electrified by the tidings of the fearful calamity. The bride lies at her home prostrated," etc., etc., etc.

is said to have been passionately fond. He also gave one glance up the street, where stood the mansion in which his blushing bride was even then preparing for the ceremony.

"He then mounted into the carriage; at the same instant — the groom had scarcely had time to step to one side — the horses bolted fiercely away, dashing down the avenue at full speed.

"The whole fearful accident happened with such lightning rapidity that no one had time to realise it.

"Prince Hagen appeared to lose his head, for he dropped the reins and seemed on the point of leaping to the ground. He was not quick enough, however, for the team, which was now wild with terror, ran only two or three blocks before the tragic end came. The wagon, which was flying from side to side, collided suddenly with the curb, overturning instantly. Prince Hagen was thrown against a lamp-post with fearful violence, fracturing several ribs and sustaining internal injuries. The *Journey* reporter was the first person to reach him, lifting him from the ground. Prince Hagen's last words were never uttered, for a sudden rush of blood choked him, and he sunk back and died several minutes later.

"Society is horrified by the accident. The bride is said to be hysterical with grief," etc., etc., etc.

Grand Chorus of all Papers.

(Three Days Later.)

"The funeral pageant was the most magnificent and impressive that this city has ever witnessed, etc. . . . The bereavement was universal, etc. . . . The friends of good government had not forgotten Prince Hagen's services; and likewise the best of New York's society turned out to honour the deceased, and to mourn his untimely end, etc., etc.

"The saddest and most touching sight of all was the bride and her family, all in deepest mourning. The circumstance that Prince Hagen had met his death at almost the very hour of his wedding made the whole scene fearfully impressive to all. As the sobbing bride was led up the aisle, there was scarcely a dry eye in the massive temple, etc. . . . The low, mournful music of Chopin's funeral march increased the tragic effect, etc., etc. . . . After the mourners marched in solemn procession, etc., etc. . . . Then was heard from the choir the thrilling voice of Madame Paganini, who had been engaged (it is said for a tremendous sum) to sing at the wedding

three days before, etc., etc. . . . Archbishop Sullivan officiated at the ceremonies that followed, assisted by Fathers O'Donnelly and Rafferty, Fathers Murphy and McGinnis, who were to have assisted at the wedding.

"In fact, every circumstance served only to recall the event so tragically interrupted, and to increase the awe in the hearts of those present, etc., etc.

"The funeral oration was delivered by Archbishop Sullivan, and was a magnificent tribute to the virtues of the deceased, as a useful and philanthropic citizen, a faithful son of the Church, and a pattern to all the ages of what a man of wealth should be. He spoke of his public-spiritedness, and his interest in the welfare of Democracy; of his private charities, and of his generous hospitality, which made him honoured of all as a shining example of the liberal-mindedness which characterises our society. He alluded then in touching terms to the bride and her tragic bereavement; and said that, if God, in His unspeakable Majesty and unfathomable Wisdom, had chosen to cut short so bright a career, we could only bow our heads before His judgment, and know how small

before His glory was all our human greatness; that all men must take this dreadful warning to their hearts, and strive more than ever to feel that 'in the midst of life, we are in death,' and that we must, at all times, be prepared to render account for the great blessings which Providence showers upon us. The oration follows in full," etc., etc., etc.

THE END.

Upton Sinclair's Greatest Book

If we investigate the existing social institutions we find that every one of them fosters or protects, in one way or another, the economic power of the industrial kings to-day. It is the men who own the mines, mills, railroads and factories that rule the world to-day.

Gradually as new systems of production have evolved during the ages, the governments, the laws, the religions and the institutions of learning, and later the press, have evolved also to fit the new regime—to foster and to protect the new economic powers.

Men who secure economic control of a nation will ultimately be able to dictate the form of government, to choose the college curriculum, to fill the mouths of the clergy with teachings that shall render docile the workers who are producing the wealth of the world. They are able to harness the press so that it shall run only in the paths leading to greater power for themselves.

Every student of sociology learns that in the evolution of Society governments have changed; new laws have come and gone, with new standards of morality. Churches have arisen or altered to meet the needs (unconsciously—perhaps) of the ruling classes of the various ages. Wise men, authors, poets and editors have ever sung the praises of the Man in Power.

Prince Hagen is the personification of Capitalism. For himself, he mocked at morality, but he realized fully how the present ethical and religious standards protect him and his class. The workingmen are many and we are few, he says. They are a thousand times more powerful than we. Only their religious beliefs, their moral scruples and their fear of the law separate them from our wealth.

But they are "honest men," he sneers. They boast of their honesty. They will touch none of our property.

We all know that many workingmen toil in misery in the hope of treasures stored up in an eternal heaven.

As a work showing the value of existing institutions for the protection and support of the capitalist system of society, Prince Hagen is invaluable.

"Prince Hagen" was originally brought out by a

very respectable Boston publisher at a high price. There was far too much truth in it to suit the tastes of the capitalistic buyers to whom it was offered, and it was soon "out of print."

The author has now wisely decided that wage-workers are the ones who will read, enjoy and circulate this book. He has therefore leased the plates to our co-operative publishing house, owned and controlled by wage-working revolutionists.

If YOU like the book, we want your help in circulating it. We have a neat library edition in cloth binding at $1.00, and will mail three copies of this to one address for $2.00.

We have also a paper edition at 25 cents, and will mail six copies to one address for $1.00, or 100 copies for $15.00.

You can get still lower prices by subscribing for a share in our co-operative publishing house. For particulars see "What to Read on Socialism," one copy of which will be mailed free.

Address

CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY

118 West Kinzie Street - - - Chicago

The

International Socialist Review

OF, BY AND FOR THE PROLETARIAT

The only great illustrated magazine that stands squarely for the revolutionary movement of the working class.

The little producers, who own a little capital, do a little work, and want a little reform, are being brushed to one side to make room for the greatest battle the world has ever seen.

On the one side are the great capitalists with a working and fighting organization that is stronger than all the governments of the world, and uses these governments at its pleasure.

On the other side are the wage-workers, just awakening to the fact that they produce everything and have nothing, irresistible in numbers, the only class without which the work of the world could not go on, but still blindly groping for an organization through which they can act together to take and enjoy what they produce.

Month by month the great capitalists are invading new fields, subduing the

forces of nature, and enrolling more men, women and children in the ranks of the proletariat.

Month by month the wage-workers are closing up their ranks and fighting here one skirmish and there another, in Mexico, Paris, Sweden, McKees Rocks, Spokane, sometimes winning, sometimes losing, but always growing into a sense of solidarity that will strengthen them in the greater battles to come.

It is the task of our REVIEW to keep its readers in touch with each new stride of industrial development and each new step toward a completer organization of the wage-workers of the world.

We are just learning how; we do it better now than when we began; we shall do it better still as thousands of fellow-workers all over the world learn what we are trying to do and help us with news of the great things doing where they themselves can see.

Send for a late number, and if we are doing the work you want done, help us to find more readers.

Monthly, 100 pages, illustrated; 10c a copy; $1.00 a year; order from address on first page of this booklet.

A SOCIALIST SUCCESS

The publishing house of Charles H. Kerr & Company was established in the year 1886. It was incorporated under the laws of Illinois in 1893. It took up the work of publishing socialist books in 1899, and in the following year it started the International Socialist Review.

The growth of the publishing house during the next eight years was steady but slow. In 1908 radical changes were made in the editorial staff and policy of the Review, and since that time the work of the publishing house has been expanding rapidly. In December, 1908, an agreement was reached with the Appeal to Reason of Girard, Kansas, the greatest socialist weekly newspaper in the world, by which it turned over its book publishing business to us.

The publishing house is owned by over 2,000 socialists, nearly all of whom have invested just $10.00 each, the price of a single share. The stock draws no dividends, but it carries with it the privilege of buying books at a discount of forty per cent, postage prepaid. A share may be obtained by remitting ten dollars with the blank on the opposite side of this sheet properly filled out.

CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY
118 West Kinzie Street, Chicago

ARE YOU WITH US?

Ours is the only publishing house in the United States that is attempting in a large way to scatter the literature of revolutionary socialism. No capitalist is behind it; its books are sold too cheaply to accumulate any large surplus out of its sales; the way to raise the new capital urgently needed is for 2,000 more socialists to do what 2,000 have already done—send $10.00 each for a share of stock.

By so doing you can, as explained on the next page, get a discount on our books. But the main reason why you should take a share of stock if you can is that by so doing you will help build up a great socialist publishing house, in which you will be joint owner. We have only made a slight beginning at the necessary work of socialist propaganda and education. Yet already we are scattering $3,000 worth of socialist books and magazines each month. With 2,000 more stockholders we will double our output during 1910. We give a detailed report of each month's business in the International Socialist Review. If you are with us, use the blank below.

CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY,

118 Kinzie Street, Chicago:

Comrades—Enclosed find ten dollars, in return for which please issue to me a share of stock in your publishing house, fully paid and non-assessable.

Name .....

No. ..... **Street**

Postoffice ..... **State** .....

Lafargue's Books

Paul Lafargue is one of the ablest and beyond doubt the most charming of the socialist writers of Europe. Charles H. Kerr has translated three of his books.

Social and Philosophical Studies shows how people's ideas of religion, justice and goodness are definitely related to the mode of production by which their material wants are satisfied.

The Right to Be Lazy and Other Studies contains six clear, strong essays appealing to the self-interest and the common sense of the wage-workers exploited under capitalism.

The Sale of an Appetite, illustrated with original drawings by Dorothy Deene, is a powerful, realistic story of a typical wage-worker.

Each volume sold separately in cloth at 50 cents, postpaid.

CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY

153 East Kinzie St., Chicago

/813.52S616PR>C1/

3 2311 00105 438 9

1499

BRARY